

I would just like to voice my opinion regarding "Amtrak". Amtrak has been a political football from it's inception but the simple fact is we not only need this valuable resource, but we need to expand it instead of shrink it or do away with it altogether. The United States leads the world in so many things but we have allowed our passenger rail system to become an underfunded barebones operation. The expectation of Amtrak to turn a profit is folly and no airline, bus line, truck line or barge operation would either if the government didn't provide the airports, highways, waterways and air traffic control. So why is Amtrak led to slaughter all the time and made to fight for it's life when no other form of passenger transportation has to pull 100% of it's own weight? As the country grows and roads become more congested and the skies reach the saturation point..... we will need rail transportation. We just can't be so short sighted. Look at France, Germany, Japan to name a few to see what they have done with "high speed rail". We have many similar corridors where this would be effective in the U.S. and we haven't even started to build one..... not one. I realize that the auto/air/oil industries have powerful lobbies that would like to see efficient passenger rail service never get off the ground as it may impact their profits, but lets get real and look to the future and plan and build for the future. More people would ride Amtrak if there were more trains per day. Build it and they will come. Look at California with the Surfliners and San Juaquin's..... they built it and the people came. If Amtrak is killed, it will forever be gone and no private industry is going to take it over and the freight railroads will never allow another entity other than the federal government to put passenger trains on their tracks so the idea to privatize any portion of Amtrak is folly. We just need the congress (government) to fund Amtrak sufficiently not only to "hang on" but fund it to grow..... and more capacity, more routes and more frequency of service. Build it and they will come. Trust me.