



TACIR

The Tennessee Advisory Commission
on Intergovernmental Relations



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MEMORANDUM

TO: Commission Members

FROM: Cliff Lippard *Cliff*
Executive Director

DATE: 27 January 2023

SUBJECT: Passenger Rail and Mobility—Panel

Public Chapter 1114, Acts of 2022, and Public Chapter 1124, Acts of 2022, direct the Commission to study passenger rail and other transportation alternatives to improve mobility in Tennessee. Public Chapter 1114 directs the Commission to conduct a study and make recommendations regarding

- the potential for passenger rail service or other suitable alternatives for passenger mobility linking the major cities in each of the grand divisions of the state;
- the alignment, condition, and ownership of tracks, defining an integrated network for intercity rail travel; and
- provide alternatives for intermodal connections between the affected airports and passenger rail services or other suitable alternatives for passenger mobility.

Public Chapter 1124 directs the Commission to collect information from at least three state departments of transportation that have successfully initiated or are in the process of initiating a new Amtrak intercity passenger rail service.

As part of the staff's research, several key stakeholders have been identified who have been instrumental in establishing passenger rail in their respective regions. Today's panelists include three who will describe their experiences with establishing, expanding, and maintaining state-supported passenger rail and a representative for the Tennessee Department of Transportation who will discuss the department's perspective on passenger rail in Tennessee. State-supported Amtrak routes are routes that are less than 750 miles.

You will hear from four panelists:

- Julie White, Chair, Southeast Corridor Commission and Deputy Secretary for Multimodal Transportation, NCDOT (via phone)
- Mike McLaughlin, Chief Operating Officer, Virginia Passenger Rail Authority
- Nicole Bucich, Vice President, Network Development, Amtrak
- Daniel Pallme, Assistant Chief of Environment and Planning / Freight and Logistics Director, TDOT

Representatives from the Class I railroads are expected to be in the audience for questions if needed. Staff plan to present a draft report for review and comment at the June meeting.