



RAIL PASSENGERS
ASSOCIATION

The Impact of Positive Onboard Experience

Webinar Series
May 2021



Agenda

PART 1	Introduction Joe Aiello National Field Coordinator
PART 2	Legislative Update VP Sean Jeans Gail
PART 3	Re-establishing Service Post-Covid Madison Butler Comms Manager
PART 4	Hearing Feedback
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PART 6	Q+A CEO Jim Mathews + Madison Butler

Federal Legislative Briefing

Sean Jeans Gail, Vice President Government Affairs + Policy
May 2021



Bipartisan Infrastructure Negotiations Slow

- White House working with Senate Republicans to close the gap between two competing infrastructure proposals:
 - Reduced from \$2.3 trillion to \$1.7 trillion, and calls for significant new investments in transit, rail, and electric vehicles (EVs);
 - However, topline fell because some funding was transferred into another bill the Senate is working on.
- Republican negotiators divided on how far they want to go:
 - Senator Capito: “the groups seem further apart after two meetings with White House staff than they were after one meeting with President Biden.”
 - Senator Wicker will release GOP \$1 trillion counteroffer on May 27; expected to be paid for by repurposed COVID money, few increases in user fees, and no tax increases.

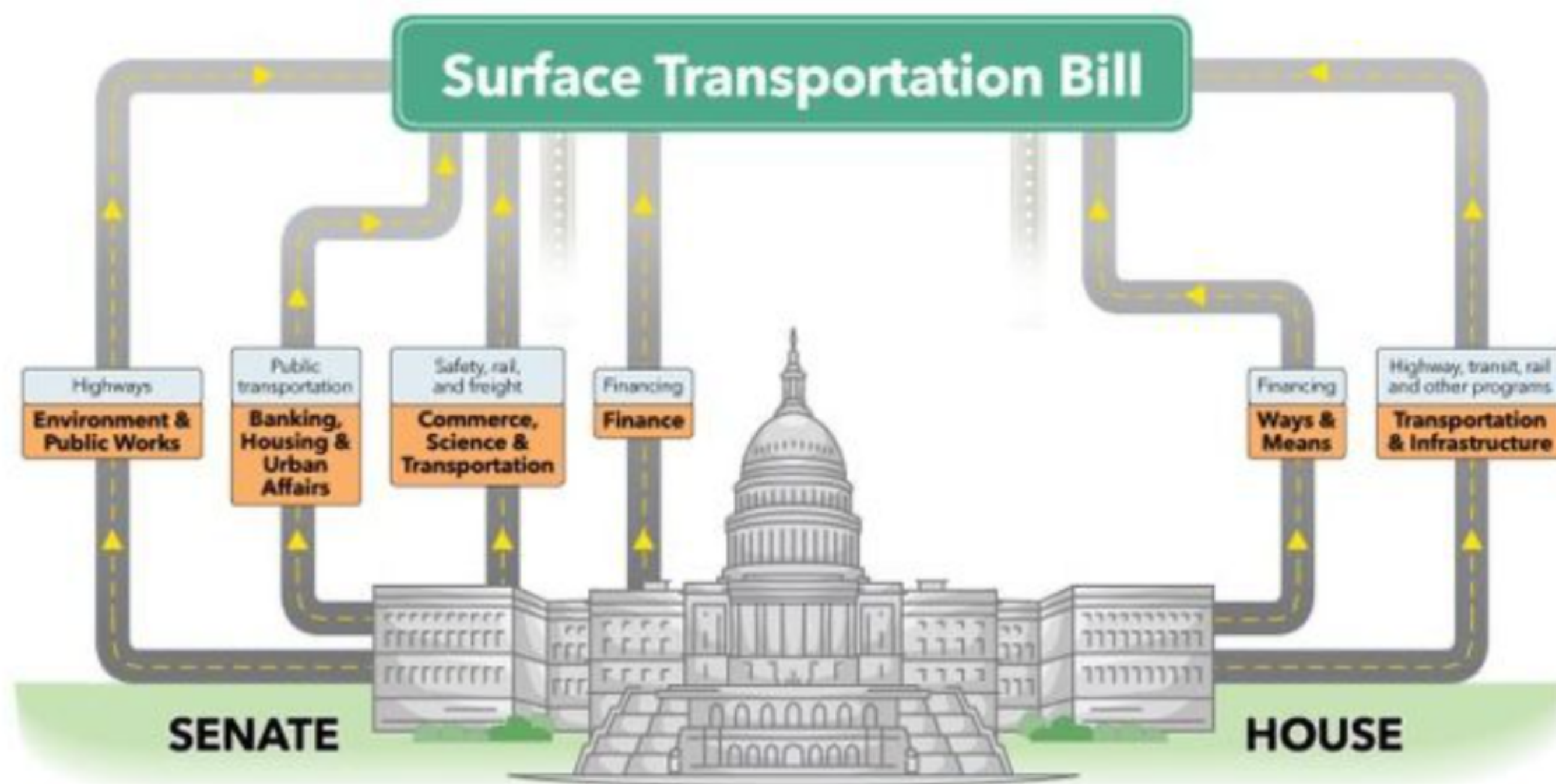
Bipartisan Infrastructure Negotiations Slow

Outstanding questions:

- The OMB will release the White House budget on May 28. How does that fit into these negotiations?
- Are Senate Republicans re-running their strategy with the American Care Act with Biden's infrastructure plan, which fundamentally altered the architecture of the proposal but ultimately received zero GOP votes?

Committees Responsible for Surface Transportation Reauthorization

Several panels will play a role in a long-term reauthorization.



Note: Additional committees – including House Energy and Commerce and Science, Space and Technology – may also be involved in the final bill.

Sources: Bloomberg Government reporting, Congressional Research Service

Bloomberg Government

Highways Go First

- Senate EPW Committee advanced bill today by 20-0 vote that will directly provide \$304.0 billion in funding for FHWA over five years:
 - **34% funding boost over the FAST Act**, or 22% above the CBO inflation-adjusted baseline;
 - **Section 1008 - Rail-Highway Grade Crossings:** \$245 million for installation of protective devices at railway-highway crossings, replacement of functionally obsolete warning devices”:
 - Federal share is increased to 100%;
 - Incentives to close a grade crossing increased from \$7,500 to \$100,000;
 - **Sec. 2001 - TIFIA:** adds TOD for passenger rail and transit to the definition of a project (capped 15 percent for loans in that fiscal year)
- HTF and MTA are on a deadline—Sept. 30. 2021—and not eligible for reconciliation.

House Surf. Trans Bill Delayed

- House T&I was scheduled to mark up its surface transportation reauthorization proposal today but delayed for due diligence on earmarks:
 - House members requested 2,380 projects totaling \$14.9 billion;
 - Roughly 50 rail projects, including Long Bridge between DC and VA, Zero Emission Locomotive Commuter Rail Pilot for Metra, and the Valley Link in CA.
 - Rescheduled hearing to take place in late June.
- House Republicans introduced bill authorizing \$400 billion over five years for highways and mass transit—with no rail title.

Time Running Short

- House won't vote again until June 14;
- July 4th recess affects both chambers;
- House scheduled to convene remotely for committee work July 6-17 and Senate in session July 12-30;
- Scheduled for in-person votes July 20-31;
- Debt limit suspension expires July 31.
- August recess (?);
- Fast Act Extension and current Budget Resolution expire Sept. 30.

Rail Passengers Launches Mayors Campaign

Rail Passengers sent out a message to 500+ Amtrak mayors and town managers telling them critical for city leaders in Amtrak-served communities to reach out to senators in their delegation to request:

1. The inclusion of a strong passenger rail title, with adequate funding to address state of good repair backlog and renew the U.S.'s aging rail fleet; and
2. The creation of new federal programs to fund additional frequencies and establish passenger rail corridors in regions that are underserved by the current network.

Thank You

Sean Jeans Gail, Vice President Government Affairs and Policy

Questions?

Sean Jeans-Gail | sjeansgail@narprail.org



Today's Presenter

Madison Butler, Communications Manager.

École des Arts Culinaires Escoffier Graduate with Honors,
Project Management, College of San Mateo

Process Developer for Edible Results and ZeroCater,
Vlogger, Blogger, Podcaster
& Public Transit Passenger since 1990.



Re-establishing Service Post-Covid

We have congressional support, hard working teams at Amtrak, and robust passenger support to diversify how food service is provided onboard.

What are the biggest hang ups to getting our services back on track?

- Repeal Mica Amendment
- Transparent communication to Congress + Working Groups by Amtrak
- Quality Control
- Connectivity

Facts:

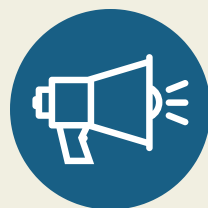
- Daily service roll out began this week
- Restoration of Dining Car: aiming for end of June
- Staggered return of non-disposable place settings to follow
- Restoration process will be different for Eastern and Western LD routes
- Timeline is dependent on return, hiring, and training
- Some routes are beta testing placing food order when you purchase ticket

POSSIBLE:

- Development of Congressional Working Group to provide clear metrics expected by taxpayers
- Menu overhaul including items most requested by our members
- Broker further discussions with Amtrak for transparency in F&B Allocations, spending, and critical path.
- Provide Amtrak with on-board food preparation methods that aren't a microwave

UNLIKELY:

- "Historical Dining" such as trend-based services found on luxury cars in the 1900's
- Full OBS process overhaul before EOY '21
- The elimination of good union jobs by allowing F&B to be taken over by a private entity



PASSENGERS WANT BETTER SERVICE

Rail Passengers Association has testified before Congress multiple times between 2019-2021.

We have advocated for your rights as passengers and your needs as rail community members.

How will Amtrak leadership signal their compliance to their passengers?



ANNOUNCE WHEN CHANGES GO INTO EFFECT

Amtrak Social Media has had many different voices over the last few years, often sharing information and advertisements that can be misleading.

What is the plan to make service change announcements cross-platform and accessible to all riders?



ENGAGE YOUR COMMUNITIES

With congressional support and a robust network of self-advocating passengers, we have the platforms to create a positive trajectory for recovery so long as we remain diligent.

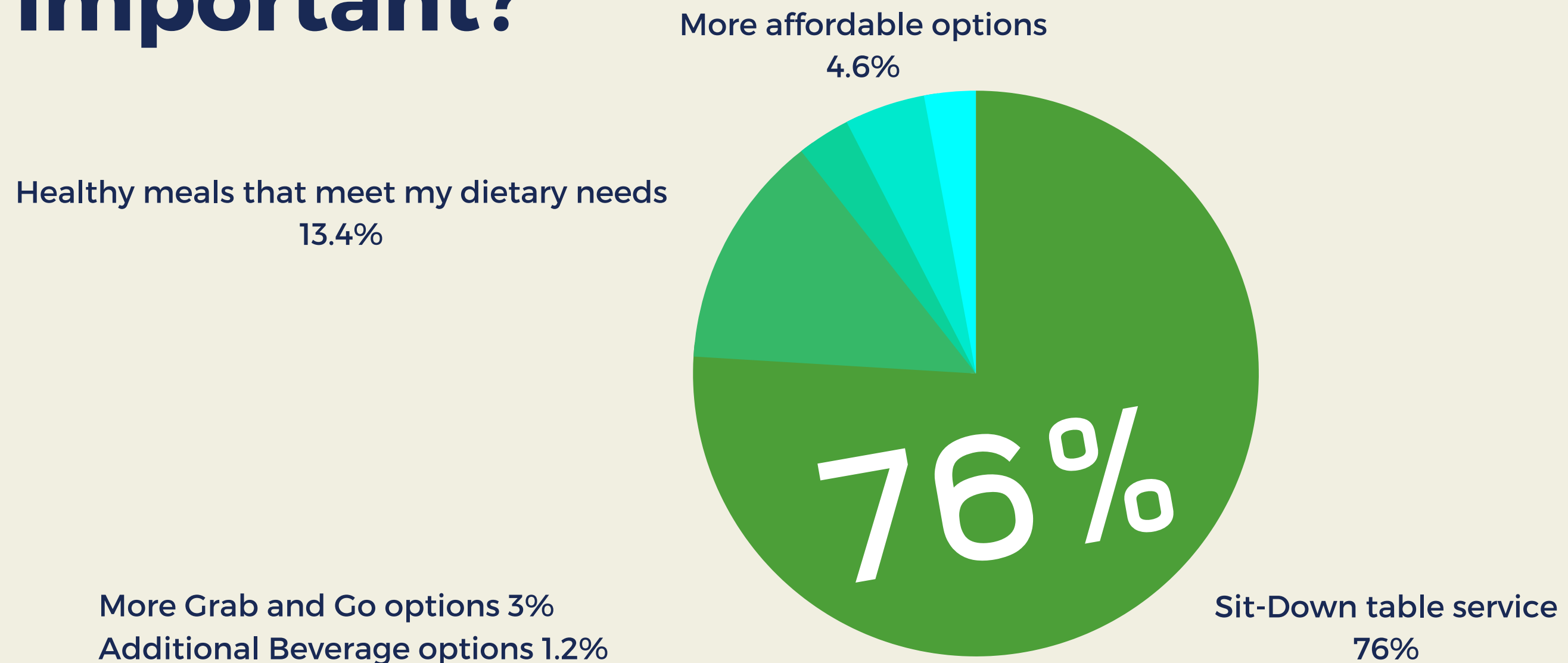
Will Amtrak rise to meet the needs of communities great and small?

Hearing Feedback

Can we rely on Amtrak to provide accurate updates on how they are meeting taxpayer needs?

Which of the following is most important?

Survey of 2,400 frequent Amtrak riders, 2019.

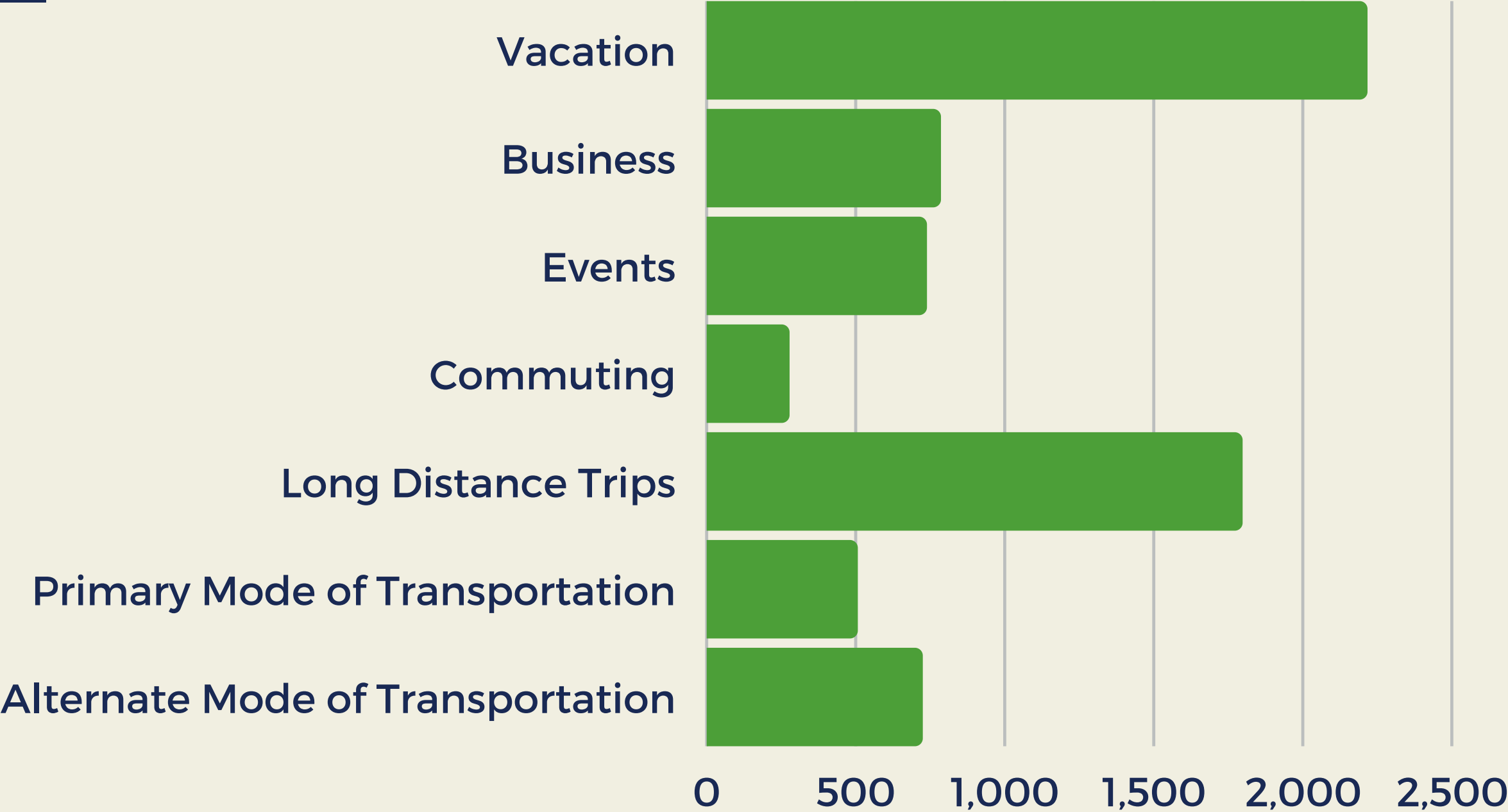


10
Passenger regions represented

18-86
Age range of Passengers surveyed

Survey of 2,400 frequent Amtrak riders, 2019.

I use passenger rail for _____.



How will Amtrak work to hear their most loyal customers?

What do you think we need to most prioritize in our food and beverage conversations? Do you have any additional constructive feedback you wish to provide?

1,568 responses

Keep the dining car

I'd rather have to pay/pay more for the food instead of losing the option altogether. I've already stopped riding some routes that don't have dining's car service.

I love the diner car.

To Keep the travelers

Long distance trains need real sit down service comparable to a restaurant. Snacks etc should be sold in the lower level of the lounge car.

Washable dishes and linens. I can't imagine the amount of trash taken off the train during a typical run!

We need people at Amtrak who support Amtrak, and wants to improve rail travel, not destroy it!

Cafe car is sufficient for me but meals are helpful on trips of 8+ hours

Please feel free to elaborate here:

1,177 responses

More enjoyable dining, like a restaurant and not 7 - 11

More concerned about fresh prepared than method of service

Better options than cold cut sandwiches and sad salads

Meals on the train having social interaction is great

Sit-down dining is an important part of a train experience for me

More interested in choice and quality of food offered with expensive sleeper-car fares

I prefer a sit down meal and chatting with the other riders. I've experienced the microwave ick along with the loneliness of sitting to eat by yourself. Not fun.

I pay top dollar for 1st class sleeper car service. I expect and demand my moneys worth...if i wanted to be treated like a 3rd class then I would fly on Delta Airlines.

Representative Colin Allred (TX-32)

Answering questions from the Association:

- You have been an active member of House T&I overseeing big changes. What service improvements are most critical in your opinion regarding the Amtrak recovery trajectory post-covid?
- People often misunderstand the role of congress in assuring the success of Amtrak. What are the keyways in which congress gauges the success of on-board services
- What would you most like to change about on-board service?
- If passed, how would the Interstate Rail Compacts Advancement Act benefit communities working to improve their passenger rail services?



Gauging Progress



Rep. Colin Allred - The Impact of Onboard Services

Watch later Share

Watch on YouTube

Gauging Progress

KEY INDICATOR	ACTIVITY / PROJECT	DATA / DESIRED OUTCOME
Increased Ridership	Expanding the Network Repairing On-Board Services Building Social Media & Ad Presence	More Public Support
Passenger Satisfaction	Coherent & Controlled Customer Service Protocol Revamped Metrics and KPIs Creating Channels for Feedback after Layoffs	New Return Passengers
New Services & Restorations	Amtrak Connects US Gulf Coast Restoration State-Supported Routes	Congressional Funding

Measures of Accountability

ROUTE SPECIFIC IMPROVEMENTS

Working groups for long distance routes comprised of workers and passengers. By creating a clear pipeline for direct feedback and metrics from those actually affected and invested, Amtrak executives could make decisions with respect to the taxpayers committed to its future.

ELIMINATING CONFIRMATION BIAS

The thought bubble and organizational behavior surrounding executive consultation is to the detriment of the passenger. We deserve consultants that come with on-board experience, not just cruise or airline experience.

PROVIDING A TRANSPARENT PIPELINE FOR FEEDBACK

With the elimination of the ACAC, Passenger survey modeling, the removal of timetables, and zero credible response from social media, how are tax payers assured our needs are being met?

To review this presentation and supporting materials visit our website:

railpassengers.org/webinars

Q&A



Jim Mathews



Madison Butler

Q&A

**HOW WILL EXISTING EQUIPMENT BE UTILIZED TO BENEFIT THE PASSENGER?
WHAT EQUIPMENT UPGRADES SHOULD BE PRIORITIZED?**

Q&A

**WHY CAN'T WE HAVE THE FOOD THAT WAS SERVED IN THE EARLY 1900'S?
IS IT JUST UNION LABOR COSTS OR ARE THERE MORE OBSTACLES?**

Q&A

**HOW IS CONGRESS WORKING TO HELP AMTRAK MEET OUR NEEDS?
WHAT CAN WE DO TO GET OUR ELECTED OFFICIALS COMMITTED TO
FUNDING AND DEVELOPING ON BOARD SERVICES?**

Q&A

**WHEN WILL ALL PASSENGERS HAVE ACCESS TO FULL MEALS?
WHY CANT COACH PASSENGERS OPT-IN TO FULL DINING NOW?**

Conclusion

Next Webinar will be ...



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The Pacific Northwest



RAIL PASSENGERS
ASSOCIATION



STAY ACTIVE



JOIN CAMPAIGNS



SPREAD THE WORD