U.S. Freight Rail Industry Comes to Washington

WASHINGTON – March 4, 2020 – Today, 450 railroad industry employees will knock on 330 doors on Capitol Hill, exercising their first Amendment right to petition their government and tell their story. The annual gathering of freight rail professionals, known as Railroad Day on Capitol Hill, was first held nearly twenty years ago. The gathering is unique as it includes representatives from all sides of the freight rail table, including Class I railroads, short line railroads, labor, shippers and manufacturers that support the rail industry.

“Our today we speak with one voice to Congress,” said Chuck Baker, President of the American Short Line and Regional Railroad Association, which represents the industry’s 600 short lines and their suppliers. “The U.S. freight rail industry is the world’s premier freight rail system and is almost entirely privately funded. It is imperative that Congress understand our challenges so that policymakers can ensure that the industry remains a competitive, effective, and environmentally sustainable form of transportation, connecting industry and small towns to the U.S. and world economies.”

Industry members will be encouraging their represented officials to a) create permanence for the Short Line Railroad 45G Tax Credit in the upcoming Surface Transportation Reauthorization bill, b) decline to increase the size and weight of trucks on the nation’s already beleaguered roadways, and c) preserve the balanced economic regulatory environment for freight railroads.
Railroad Day on the Hill has become one of the most organized and comprehensive industry days in Washington, one that members of Congress look forward to annually.

“In addition to providing an opportunity for our industry to share their stories, Railroad Day sets the table for substantive future conversations with Congress on a variety of issues that will confront them in the year ahead including infrastructure maintenance and investment, surface transportation reauthorization, economic regulation, and more,” continued Baker. “Each meeting is an opportunity to make a connection and educate staff on district impacts of legislative actions that affect the railroads and the thousands of customers and communities that depend on our service.”

About ASLRRA - The American Short Line and Regional Railroad Association (ASLRRA) is a non-profit trade association representing the interests of the nation’s 600 short line and regional railroads and railroad supply company members in legislative and regulatory matters. Short lines operate 47,500 miles of track in 49 states, touching in origination or termination one out of every four cars moving on the national railroad system, serving customers who otherwise would be cut off from the national railroad network.