U.S. DOT’s Build America Bureau Offers Webinar on INFRA Grants

On August 14, the Build America Bureau will hold a webinar at 2:00 pm EST entitled, *How to Compete for INFRA Grants*. Please [click here](#) to register. State DOT’s, municipalities, local governments, port authorities, and others are encouraged to view this explanatory webinar on how to apply for INFRA funding - intended for all applicants. There is no registration fee for this session, however advance registration is required. Additional information and recordings of previously held webinars are posted to the [INFRA Webinar Series](#) webpage, where you can learn more about the INFRA discretionary grant program that will make approximately $1.5 billion available to Nationally Significant Freight and Highway Projects that are in line with the Administration’s principles to help rebuild America’s crumbling infrastructure.

Registration Now Open for All Three ASLRAA Regional Meetings

ASLRA’s Regional Meetings are the must-attend events of the fall for everyone in the railroad industry, including Short Line and Class I railroad professionals, shippers, industry suppliers, and industry-affiliated stakeholders. Plus, the enhanced educational content will benefit the management team and personnel in every role from safety, operations, and engineering professionals to general managers, marketing and business development personnel. [Click here](#) for more information and register today!

Legislative Update

**August is a Great Time to Reach Out About the BRACE Act**

Many members of Congress are using August to work in their districts or states. August is a great time to set up a visit to your railroad by your Senator or Representative. Please contact our Washington team’s Lindsey Collins for assistance in organizing your event from start to finish. Any type of event, tour, or meeting that you can put together, even something very simple, can go a long way towards our cause. Even if your Congressmen isn’t able to get something scheduled, just reaching out to them is of great value. Please [visit our website](#) for plenty of information, handouts, and maps, and contact our Washington team’s Fred Oelsner if you’d like assistance communicating the importance of extending the 45G Short Line Tax Credit to your representatives and their staff whether by email, phone call or in person.

**Congress Departs for Recess; Batory Confirmation Vote Must Wait**

The Senate confirmed dozens of pending nominations in a flurry of voting prior to leaving for recess, including Robert Sumwalt to be a member and chairman of the National Transportation Safety Board. David Pekoske was also confirmed as TSA administrator. Other pending nominations, including Ron Batory to head the Federal Railroad Administration and Steven Bradbury to serve as U.S. Department of Transportation’s general counsel, were not included in the en bloc confirmations, but must wait until Congress returns for the fall session.
Grass Roots Visits

Grass Roots visits are a proven, effective way to tell the short line story to our representatives in Washington DC as well as in our state capitols. Please contact our Washington team’s Lindsey Collins for more information, and plan your invitation and visit today!

U.S. Congressman Mike Kelly Visits Buffalo & Pittsburgh Railroad

U.S. Congressman Mike Kelly (PA-03), a member of the House Ways & Means Committee, visited the Buffalo & Pittsburgh Railroad in Butler, Pennsylvania on August 2nd. Congressman Kelly addressed over 50 employees on current national issues, including the importance of short line freight railroads to the national and local economies. He strongly supports the short line and regional railroad industry, and has been a co-sponsor of short line tax credit bills every year since becoming a member of the House of Representatives in 2010. Following his talk, he spent time talking one-on-one with the employees in attendance.

Congressman Don Bacon Visits Omaha Track and Rail Stakeholders

On August 2nd, U.S. Congressman Don Bacon (R-NE-2)(pictured second from left) joined representatives from ASLRRA associate business member Omaha Track, Inc., to tour Omaha Track’s new Omaha facilities, learn about their extensive railway products and services, and discuss public policy priorities for the business and rail communities in greater Omaha. Participants included Cathy Emig, Bud Mushlitz, Jeff Peterson, Kevin Whited and Lisa Roberts, all of Omaha Track; Judy Petry, President of Farmrail System, Inc. and chair of the American Short Line and Regional Railroad Association (picured 5th from left); Heather Sheppard of ASLRRA member Farmrail System Inc.; and Sean Winkler of REMSA. Formerly known as The Tie Yard of Omaha, the business now employs approximately 170 in Omaha and 250 across their organization. The tour was led by Omaha Track’s President and Owner Terry Peterson (pictured 3rd from left).

Organized by the Railway Engineering-Maintenance and Suppliers Association (REMSA), Bacon’s visit also featured a discussion of public policy issues. The congressman serves on the House Armed Services, Agriculture and Small Business committees.

Regulatory Update

FMCSA and FRA Withdraw Advance Notice of Proposed Rulemaking on Obstructive Sleep Apnea

On August 4th, the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) and the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) withdrew the March 10, 2016, advance notice of proposed rulemaking concerning the prevalence of moderate-to-severe obstructive sleep apnea (OSA) among individuals occupying safety sensitive positions in highway and rail transportation, and its potential consequences for the safety of highway and rail transportation.
The agencies have determined not to issue a notice of proposed rulemaking at this time and believe that current safety programs and FRA’s rulemaking addressing fatigue risk management are the appropriate avenues to address OSA. Click [here](#) to read the Federal Register notice.

**Transcaer Ethanol Training DVD’s Now Available**

The NEW highly anticipated TRANSCAER® RFA Ethanol Training DVD is now available! RFA just completed the newly updated 2017 version of the Training Guide to Ethanol Emergency Response. The program is TRANSCAER® branded and part of the TRANSCAER® National Training Tour. The classroom portion is both available on DVD and downloadable online. For more information, or to request a FREE physical copy of the training program, please email Safety@EthanolRFA.org. The ethanol safety program consists of eight modules and each has a video presentation, PowerPoint presentations embedded with instructor notes, instructor manuals and a participant guide. The training modules cover an introduction to ethanol; ethanol and ethanol-blended fuels; chemical and physical characteristics of ethanol and hydrocarbon fuels; transportation and transfer; storage and dispensing locations; firefighting foam principles; general health and safety considerations; and storage and pre-planning considerations, and now includes Spanish versions. It also includes a new Rail Tank Car 101 walk-around video and PowerPoint presentation, as well as customizable posters, brochures and a press release template.

**DOT Proposes Almost $79 Million in Grants for Infrastructure Projects Under FAST Act**

U.S. Transportation Secretary Elaine Chao has informed Congress that the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) has proposed nearly $79 million in grants for freight-related rail, port and roadway infrastructure projects under the Fixing America’s Surface Transportation (FAST) Act. The notification to Congress, sent Aug. 2, initiates a 60-day period in which Congress could vote to disapprove the proposed projects if it finds a project objectionable, according to a report by the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO).

The proposed awards would be distributed under the Fostering Advancements in Shipping and Transportation for the Long-term Achievement of National Efficiencies (FASTLANE) grant program, which the Trump administration now refers to as the Infrastructure for Rebuilding America (INFRA) program. The deadline for applications is November 2nd for fiscal-year 2017 large projects and FY2018 large and small projects under the INFRA grants program.

**NTSB Warns Rail Workers of Risks**

The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) has warned rail workers of the risks of working on tracks using only a watchman or lookout to provide the train-approach warning. NTSB Chairman Robert L. Sumwalt notes that this is “a reminder to railroad employees to remain vigilant for approaching trains - whether they are the watchman/lookout or whether they are working on the tracks.” Please [click here](#) to read the press release.

**Member News**

**Siemens Opens Locomotive Service Hub in New Castle, DE**

Siemens Industry, Inc., an ASLRA associate business member, is opening a new Locomotive Service facility in New Castle, Delaware that will operate as the company’s digital service, supply chain, and technical field training hub in the region. The 44,000 square-foot New Castle facility will combine Siemens’ global digital analytics know-how with its extensive industry knowledge to move rail further into the digital age. Using the latest in digital and predictive technology, the New Castle team will train service technicians and remotely maintain Siemens locomotives for customers including Amtrak, the Maryland Transit Administration, the Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority, Brightline, and the Illinois Department of Transportation, among others. The company also will also use virtual reality goggles and handheld controls, a service technician can virtually stand inside a...
locomotive and use the handheld controls to work on switches, components and panels. Please click here to read the press release.

**ASLRRA’s Railroad Members and Holding Companies send Keynote and Panelist to AARS Conference**

Recruiting and retaining younger workers and developing them into future leaders was a frequent topic discussed at the recent annual meeting of the American Association of Railroad Superintendents (AARS) in St. Louis. At the annual meeting’s opening session on July 24, OmniTRAX Inc. Executive Chairman Ed Harris in his “charge to superintendents” made a pitch for encouraging younger generations to consider railroading as a career. “The opportunities in this industry are a good thing, [but] we do not have enough young people interested in this industry,” he told the attendees. Later in the morning, a panel of railroad executives talked about how good training programs can go a long way toward retaining workers by keeping them interested in their jobs and committed to their employers. Serving on the “Day-to-Day Management Panel” were John Wright, general manager of Indiana Harbor Belt Railroad; Rachael Peterson, senior vice president of people services at Watco Companies LLC; and Michael Collier, vice president mechanical, Genesee & Wyoming Inc.

**Reading & Northern Railroad Participates in Shipping Coal to Ukraine**

ASLRRA member Reading & Northern Railroad is participating in a huge move of coal to Ukraine. Xcoal Energy & Resources made the deal to ship 700,000 tons of coal for energy production to Ukraine by the end of the year. Half of that tonnage will be made up of Pennsylvania anthracite shipped from mines served by Reading & Northern Railroad. In Ukraine for the announcement Xcoal President Ernie Thrasher said, “The U.S. coal will replace Russian origin coal at existing thermal power plants, i.e., energy security and diversification.” Reading & Northern will be supplying all of the coal cars used to handle the anthracite. In order to build the 100+ car unit trains that Norfolk Southern will pick up at Reading, PA and deliver to CNX Terminal in Baltimore, MD, Reading & Northern will serve as many as six different loading points.

**Genesee & Wyoming Railroad Inc. Celebrates 15th Listing Anniversary by Striking NYSE Closing Bell**

The New York Stock Exchange welcomed Genesee & Wyoming Railroad Inc. in recognition of its 15th anniversary of listing to ring the closing bell on July 26th. G&W executives and guests were on hand as SVP, Safety, Compliance and Training Tyrone James did the honors. Watch the video by clicking here.

**Anacostia Rail Holdings Announces Finance Department Hiring and Promotions**

Anacostia Rail Holdings, parent company to five ASLRRA railroad members and one associate member, has announced finance department changes: James R. Zubik joined Anacostia in June as vice president of finance and administration; R. S. (Scott) Morgan, vice president and controller, is retiring at the end of August; George H. Griggs will be promoted from director of accounting to controller. Mr. Zubik most recently was asset manager for BP U.S. Pipelines & Logistics, Naperville, Ill. During his 30-year career, including 16 years at BP, he worked in several roles advancing from staff accountant to audit manager to controller for both private and public companies. He is a certified public accountant and holds a master of business administration degree from the University of Notre Dame and a bachelor’s degree from Northern Illinois University. Anacostia Rail Holdings Executive Vice President and Chief Financial Officer Bruce Lieberman said, “Jim’s extensive career, including progressive, more responsible positions, is enhancing ARH’s finance and accounting functions—particularly the analytical aspects.”
Register Today!

Webinar: Change to Gift Tax Law and its Effect on Succession Planning

On August 11th, please join William T. Kriesel, CPA/PFS, CFP®, AEP®, Partner-in-Charge; Financial Planning, Bowers & Company CPAs PLLC, for a review of final and proposed changes to valuation requirements as related to gift taxes, and their impact on transferring businesses within the family. Planning for cash flow for the transitioning member, from either an installment sale, deferred compensation or other funding stream. Register today!

Short Line Safety Institute Webinar: High, Wide and Heavy: Moving your Big Freight Safely

Join the Short Line Safety Institute on August 16th, for an educational webinar on High and Wide Shipments and their innovative aspects, including inspections and safety measures to consider. Ask our expert, Mr. Clay Gambill, an experienced railroad and operations presenter, as he walks us through big safety topics for big freight. Mr. Gambill will explore limitations, structures, research and the general movement of a High and Wide Shipment. He will also review regular train operations, speed, location in train, visibility, and other special handling requirements due to extreme dimensions, securement, measurement and inspection. Many short lines play a role in these shipments, which require a lot of effort. Education and communication before, during and after these moves are key to ensuring a safe delivery. Register today!

Webinar: New Repair Regulations

On August 22nd, please join Dave Ayoub, CPA, Partner-in-Charge: Tax Department, Bowers & Company CPAs PLLC and Rick A. Tidd, CPA/ABV/CGMA, CVA, CFF, CITP, Partner-in-Charge: B&C Valuation Group, Bowers & Company CPAs PLLC and discuss the answers to such questions as: Should you currently expense costs for routine (sometimes heavy and costly) maintenance on locomotives and equipment, or capitalize them? Does the Company or Shareholders own real estate? Do improvements to that real estate always have to be capitalized? Please click here to register.

Webinar: HR Series Pt. IV - End of Leave Considerations and Transition

On September 14th, please join us for the final webinar of our four-part series. Tracey Donesky, Partner, Stinson Leonard Street LLP, and Bobbi Allen, Director of Human Resources, Iowa Interstate Railroad Ltd. will focus on the many varied, overlapping and at times complicated considerations that come into play when employees return from leave. Topics covered will include legal and practical considerations relating to: return to work; fitness for duty functional capacity evaluations (FCE); reinstatement; leave, transitions, and other alternatives. Please click here to register.

Webinar: Using Cost Data for Decision

On September 19, please join Joseph M. Mocciaro CPA, CMA, Partner, Bowers & Company CPAs PLLC, for a review of practical tools for costing and evaluating service offerings and capital investments for short line railroads. Click here to register.
ASLRRA’s Southern Region Meeting

Don’t miss ASLRRA’s Southern Region Meeting, this year to be held at the Charleston Marriott in Charleston, SC on September 25 - 27, 2017! Last year, we added a full day of presentations - running concurrently with the meeting agenda - specifically to serve the needs of operating personnel on short line and regional railroads. We are updating this content and offering it again, to benefit COO’s, General Managers, Superintendents and Roadmasters. At the same time, regional meeting attendees will enjoy an action-packed agenda with educational offerings and takeaways built upon three core areas of focus: Safety and Training; Legislative and Regulatory; and Marketing and Business Development. Please click here to find out more and register today!

ASLRRA’s Eastern Region Meeting

Registration is open for ASLRRA’s Eastern Region Meeting, this year at the Omni Providence Hotel in Providence, RI on October 23 - 25, 2017. New this year, we have added a concurrent track to the line up of the Eastern Region Meeting with a full day of presentations created specifically to give a more in-depth look at Hazmat and Technology topics for short line and regional railroads. ASLRRA’s Regional Meetings offer a dynamic agenda with top-notch speakers, engaging interactive sessions, and meaningful takeaways that will benefit professionals at every level of your organization. Register today!

ASLRRA’s Central/Pacific Region Meeting

Registration is open for ASLRRA’s Central/Pacific Region Meeting, this year at the Intercontinental Kansas City at the Plaza in Kansas City, MO on November 13-15, 2017. This year, our Finance & Administration Seminar and General Counsel Symposium will be held at the same venue immediately following the Regional meeting - a value add for attendees in the Finance, Human Resources and Legal sectors who can now take advantage of both meetings in only one trip. Please click here to register today!

Save the Dates!

General Counsel Symposium/Finance & Administration Seminar
Intercontinental Kansas City at the Plaza
Kansas City, Missouri
November 15 - 17, 2017

Views & News is published by the American Short Line and Regional Railroad Association. Please contact Elizabeth Sands, Editor, epetty@aslrra.org, with any questions or comments.