Congress Calls for Permanence of 45G With New Bill: H.R. 510

Representatives Earl Blumenauer (D-Ore.) and Mike Kelly (R-Pa.) introduced the 2019 BRACE Act, H.R. 510, on January 11, 2019. Once again, Congress is on record to make the Short Line Tax Credit permanent.

ASLRA released the following statement today, “We are pleased that the House, once again, has recognized the need to make permanent the Short Line Tax Credit. We urge Congress to act quickly, before the 2018 tax deadline, to ensure that railroads can meet our customer’s transportation needs safely and efficiently,” said Judy Petry, ASLRA Chair and President and General Manager of Farmrail System, Inc. “The continuation of this credit is good public policy, allowing our industry to do its share toward improving the nation’s infrastructure by incentivizing railroads to increase their capital investment.”

Apply Now for the Susan C. Murray Memorial Women’s Scholarship

Applications are due February 15 for the Susan C. Murray Memorial Women’s Scholarship, which is awarded annually to a daughter or granddaughter of an ASLRA railroad or associate member company employee.

IHS Markit, publisher of The Pocket List of Railroad Officials, Official Railway Guide and other products, administers the scholarship. It is named for Susan C. Murray, who was vice president of directories for Commonwealth Business Media, a precursor to IHS Markit. She was influential in the launch of ASLRA’s annual trade show.

The scholarship winner will be announced at this year’s ASLRA CONNEXIONS Convention in Florida.
ASLRRA to Sign Letter Commenting on Notice of Proposed Rulemaking

ASLRRA has joined interested parties, such as the Association of Hazmat Shippers, in signing a letter submitting comments to the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA) regarding a notice of proposed rulemaking to amend the Hazardous Materials Regulations (HMR).

The letter comments on PHMSA’s plan to modify the HMR to more closely align them with changes made to the International Maritime Dangerous Goods Code, the International Civil Aviation Organization’s Technical Instructions for the Safe Transport of Dangerous Goods by Air, and the United Nations Recommendations on the Transport of Dangerous Goods—Model Regulations.

Much of the letter provides input regarding PHMSA’s proposal for implementing a new and expanded competency-based training (CBT) system to replace the agency’s current training provisions. Ultimately, the concern is that the CBT system is overly complicated and potentially burdensome for most U.S. companies, and the letter recommends retaining existing training requirements.

116th Congress Sworn in, Work Begins On ASLRRA Priorities

January has arrived and members of the 116th Congress have been sworn in. As you have likely seen covered on the national news, there is an ongoing partial government shutdown which will persist until Congress and President Trump can come to agreement on the full suite of FY19 appropriations bills. Funding for a southern border wall is the primary driver of the dispute despite being a relatively tiny monetary piece of the package being considered.

There is good news. Despite the ongoing political situation, a new standalone bill, H.R. 510 has been introduced, which if passed would make the 45G short line tax credit permanent. Your team in Washington is now in top gear, driving support for this bill in the form co-sponsorships by supportive members of Congress. Now is great time to call your representatives and ask them support H.R. 510, which is identical to the BRACE Act (H.R. 721) which was introduced by members of the 115th Congress.
ASLRRA is also keeping a close eye on the still outstanding FY2019 appropriations bills, all of which will impact short line priorities such as the BUILD and CRISI grant programs and policy issues surrounding maximum truck sizes and weights.

New Members

ASLRRA is Pleased to Welcome Two New Members

Rail Logix, based in Houston, Texas, is a privately-owned rail yard operator specializing in the storage, handling and switching of railcars for users in the petrochemical, energy, agricultural and logistics industries. Established in 2007, Rail Logix combines railcar handling, switching, and staging services with augmented services such as railcar cleaning, maintenance, and transloading. Several of its operations are now members, including Rail Logix LP, Rail Logix Alamo Junction LLC, Rail Logix Ameriport LLC and Rail Logix Lacassine, LLC. Safety & Compliance Manager Robert Bailey is our primary contact and can be reached at rbailey@rail-logix.com.

Venable LLP, with offices in eight U.S. locations, describes itself as more than a law firm. It is also a network of trusted advisors serving clients in all areas of corporate and business law, complex litigation, intellectual property, public policy and regulatory affairs. It provides the rail industry with counseling and legal services related to receiving federal procurement and non-procurement funds, environmental and construction permitting and licensing to address a host of statutory and regulatory requirements, federal and state government affairs advocacy, and traditional corporate, transactional and litigation representation. Our primary contact at the firm is Dismas Locaria, partner, who can be reached at dlocaria@venable.com. ASLRRA thanks Mike Ogborn of Ogborn Consulting Group for the assist with this new membership.

ASLRRA Events

Registration is Open for ASLRRA’s 2019 CONNECTIONS Convention

ASLRRA has opened registration for its annual CONNECTIONS Convention, held April 6-9 at the Marriott World Center in Orlando, Fla.

This year’s convention includes a variety of speakers and educational sessions, social events and networking opportunities, and an expo hall full of exhibitors and activities. Federal Railroad Administration Administrator Ron Batory will speak, as will ASLRRA Chair Judy Petry. There will also be an ASLRRA PAC event at SeaWorld, a golf outing and Young Professionals mentoring session.

Those who register early receive a $100-dollar discount. Additionally, anyone interested in booking a room in the Orlando World Center Marriott at the special convention rate should do so soon, as availability is limited.

CONNECTIONS Silent Auction is Accepting Donations
ASLRA’s 2019 CONNECTIONS Convention will once again feature an exciting silent auction benefitting the Short Line Education Fund, and we need your support to make it a success. The Education Fund is a 501c3 nonprofit organization and funds raised will support industry training and certification initiatives. Remember, donations are tax-deductible. To make a donation, simply complete the 2019 Donation Form or contact Sabrina Waiss to discuss a donation. Thank you for your support!

Click here for more ASLRA events.

Industry Events

Outback Railroad Association to Hold Safety Training Event in May

Join the Outback Railroad Association at its 5th Annual Safety Training Event May 14-16 in Deadwood, S.D. The conference will feature presentations by Gary Wolf and BNSF Railway, as well as breakout sessions and hands-on field training. Click here for a registration form.

Click here for a listing of industry events.

Views & News is published by American Short Line and Regional Railroad Association. Please contact Amy Krouse, editor, with questions or comments.