

Public Law 93-146

AN ACT

November 3, 1973
[S. 2016]

To amend the Rail Passenger Service Act of 1970 to provide financial assistance to the National Railroad Passenger Corporation, and for other purposes.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That this Act may be cited as the "Amtrak Improvement Act of 1973".

Amtrak Improvement Act of 1973.

84 Stat. 1328.

SEC. 2. Section 102 of the Rail Passenger Service Act of 1970 (45 U.S.C. 502), relating to definitions, is amended—

(1) by striking out paragraph (5), relating to the definition of intercity rail passenger service, and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

"Intercity rail passenger service."

"(5) 'Intercity rail passenger service' means all rail passenger service other than commuter and other short-haul service in metropolitan and suburban areas, usually characterized by reduced fare, multiple-ride and commutation tickets, and by morning and evening peak period operations."; and

(2) by adding at the end thereof the following new paragraph:

"Auto-ferry service."

"(9) 'Auto-ferry service' means intercity rail passenger service characterized by transportation of automobiles and their occupants."

Board of directors.
84 Stat. 1330.

SEC. 3. (a) Section 303(a) of the Rail Passenger Service Act of 1970 (45 U.S.C. 543(a)), relating to the board of directors, is amended to read as follows:

"(a) (1) The Corporation shall have a board of directors consisting of seventeen individuals who are citizens of the United States selected as follows:

"(A) The Secretary of Transportation, ex officio.

"(B) Nine members appointed by the President, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, to serve for terms of four years or until their successors have been appointed and qualified, of whom not more than five shall be appointed from the same political party.

"(C) Three members elected annually by the common stockholders of the Corporation.

"(D) Four members elected annually by the preferred stockholders of the Corporation, which members shall be elected as soon as practicable after the first issuance of preferred stock by the Corporation.

Vacancy.

"(2) Any vacancy in the membership of the board shall be filled in the same manner as in the case of the original selection; except that any member appointed by the President under paragraph (1) (B) of this subsection to fill a vacancy shall be appointed only for the unexpired term of the member he is appointed to succeed.

Chairman.

"(3) The board shall elect one of its members annually to serve as Chairman.

"(4) Not less than three members appointed by the President shall be designated by him, at the time of their appointment, to serve as consumer representatives, of whom not more than two shall be members of the same political party.

"(5) Each member not employed by the Federal Government shall receive compensation at the rate of \$300 for each meeting of the board he attends. In addition, each member shall be reimbursed for necessary travel and subsistence expenses incurred in attending meetings of the board.

"(6) No member elected by railroads shall vote on any action of the board relating to any contract or operating relationship between the Corporation and a railroad, but he may be present at meetings of the

board at which such matters are voted upon, and he may be included for purposes of determining a quorum and may participate in discussions at any such meeting.

“(7) No member appointed by the President may—

“(A) have any direct or indirect financial or employment relationship with any railroad, nor

“(B) have any significant direct or indirect financial relationship, or any direct or indirect employment relationship, with any person engaged in the transportation of passengers in competition with the Corporation, during the time that he serves on the board.

“(8) Pending the election of the four members by the preferred stockholders of the Corporation under paragraph (1)(D) of this subsection, seven members shall constitute a quorum for the purpose of conducting the business of the board.

“(9) Any vacancy in the membership of the board of directors required to be filled by appointment by the President under paragraph (1)(B) of this subsection shall be filled by the President not more than one hundred and twenty days after such vacancy occurs.”

(b)(1) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the term of each member of the board of directors appointed by the President under section 303(a) of the Rail Passenger Service Act of 1970 (as in effect on the day before the date of enactment of this Act) who is serving under such appointment on such date of enactment, shall expire on the thirtieth day after such date of enactment, except that each such member so serving shall continue to serve until his successor is appointed and qualified or until the expiration of the one-hundred-twenty-day period beginning on the thirtieth day after such date of enactment, whichever first occurs. No member of the board of directors referred to in the preceding sentence shall be ineligible for appointment as such a member after the date of enactment of this Act solely by reason of the enactment of such preceding sentence.

(2) Notwithstanding section 303(a)(1)(B) of the Rail Passenger Service Act of 1970, of the members of the board of directors first appointed by the President under such section 303(a)(1)(B), three shall be appointed to serve for terms of two years and three shall be appointed to serve for terms of three years.

SEC. 4. (a) Section 305(a) of the Rail Passenger Service Act of 1970 (45 U.S.C. 545(a)), relating to general powers of the Corporation, is amended by striking out the second sentence thereof.

SEC. 5. Section 305(b) of the Rail Passenger Service Act of 1970 (45 U.S.C. 545(b)), relating to general powers of the Corporation, is amended by striking out the second sentence and inserting in lieu thereof the following: “In order to increase revenues and to better accomplish the purposes of this Act, the Corporation is authorized to modify its services to provide auto-ferry service as a part of the basic passenger services authorized by this Act, except that nothing contained in this Act shall prevent any other person, other than a railroad (except that for purposes of this section a person primarily engaged in auto-ferry service shall not be deemed to be a railroad), from providing such auto-ferry service over any route in accordance with a certificate issued by the Commission if—

“(1) the Commission finds that such auto-ferry service—

“(A) will not impair the ability of the Corporation to reduce its losses or to increase its revenues, and

“(B) is required to meet the demands of the public, or

“(2) such auto-ferry service is being performed by such person on the date of enactment of this paragraph under contracts entered into before October 30, 1970.

Prohibitions.

Quorum.

Term.

Ante, p. 548.

84 Stat. 1332;
86 Stat. 228.
Auto-ferry service.

Nothing in this section shall be construed to restrict the right of a railroad that has not entered into a contract with the Corporation for the provision of rail passenger service from performing auto-ferry service over its own lines. The Corporation is authorized to acquire, lease, modify, or develop the equipment and facilities required for the efficient provision of mail, express, and auto-ferry service, or to enter into contracts for the provision of such service."

Ante, p. 549.

Elderly or
handicapped
individuals.

SEC. 6. Section 305 of the Rail Passenger Service Act of 1970 (45 U.S.C. 545), relating to general powers of the Corporation, is amended by adding at the end thereof the following new subsections:

"(c) The Corporation is authorized to take all steps necessary to insure that no elderly or handicapped individual is denied intercity transportation on any passenger train operated by or on behalf of the Corporation, including but not limited to, acquiring special equipment and devices and conducting special training for employees; designing and acquiring new equipment and facilities and eliminating architectural and other barriers in existing equipment and facilities to comply with the highest standards for the design, construction, and alteration of property for the accommodation of elderly and handicapped individuals; and providing special assistance while boarding and alighting and in terminal areas to elderly and handicapped individuals.

Acquisition of
property.

"(d) (1) The Corporation is authorized, to the extent financial resources are available, to acquire any right-of-way, land, or other property (except right-of-way, land, or other property of a railroad or property of a State or political subdivision thereof or of any other governmental agency), which is required for the construction of tracks or other facilities necessary to provide intercity rail passenger service, by the exercise of the right of eminent domain, in accordance with the provisions of this subsection, in the district court of the United States in which such property is located or in any such court if a single piece of property is located in more than one judicial district: *Provided*, That such right may only be exercised when the Corporation cannot acquire such property by contract or is unable to agree with the owner as to the amount of compensation to be paid.

"(2) The Corporation shall file with the complaint, or at any time before judgment, a declaration of taking containing or having annexed thereto—

"(A) a statement of the public use for which the property is taken;

"(B) a description of the property taken sufficient for the identification thereof;

"(C) a statement of the estate or interest in the property taken;

"(D) a plan showing the property taken; and

"(E) a statement of the amount of money estimated by the Corporation to be just compensation for the property taken.

Compensation
for property.

"(3) Upon the filing of the declaration of taking and the depositing in the court of the amount of money estimated in such declaration to be just compensation for the property, the property shall be deemed to be condemned and taken for the use of the Corporation. Title to such property shall thereupon vest in the Corporation in fee simple absolute or in any lesser estate or interest specified in the declaration of taking, and the right to the money deposited as estimated just compensation shall immediately vest in the persons entitled thereto. The court, after a hearing, shall make a finding as to the amount of money which constitutes just compensation for such property and shall make an award and enter judgment accordingly. Such judgment shall include, as part of the just compensation awarded, interest on the

amount finally awarded as the value of the property on the date of taking minus the amount deposited in the court on such date, at the rate of 6 per centum per annum from the date of taking to the date of payment.

“(4) Upon the application of the parties in interest, the court may order that the money deposited in the court, or any part thereof, be paid forthwith for or on account of the just compensation to be awarded in the proceeding. If the compensation finally awarded exceeds the amount of the money received by any person entitled to compensation, the court shall enter judgment against the Corporation for the amount of the deficiency.

“(5) Upon the filing of a declaration of taking, the court may fix the time within which, and the terms upon which, the parties in possession are required to surrender possession to the Corporation. The court may make such orders in respect to encumbrances, liens, rents, taxes, assessments, insurance, and other charges, if any, as shall be just and equitable.

“(e) The Corporation is authorized to take all steps necessary to—

“(1) establish improved reservations systems and advertising;

“(2) service, maintain, repair, and rehabilitate railroad passenger equipment;

“(3) conduct research and development and demonstration programs respecting new rail passenger services;

“(4) develop and demonstrate improved rolling stock;

“(5) establish and maintain essential fixed facilities for the operation of passenger trains on lines and routes included in the basic system, over which no through passenger trains are being operated at the time of enactment of this Act, including necessary track connections between lines on the same or different railroads;

“(6) purchase or lease railroad rolling stock;

“(7) develop and operate international intercity rail passenger service between points within the United States and points in Canada and Mexico, including Montreal, Canada; Vancouver, Canada; and Nuevo Laredo, Mexico (for purposes of section 404(b) of this Act, such international rail passenger service is service included within the basic system); and

“(8) to carry out other corporate purposes.”

SEC. 7. Section 306 of the Rail Passenger Service Act of 1970 (45 U.S.C. 546), relating to the applicability of the Interstate Commerce Act and other laws, is amended by adding at the end thereof the following new subsection:

“(h) No common carrier by railroad may refuse to participate with the Corporation in providing auto-ferry service on the grounds that a State or local law or regulation makes the service unlawful; and neither the Corporation nor such railroad shall be subject to any fine, penalty, or other sanction for violation of a State or local law or regulation which has the effect of prohibiting or impairing the provision of auto-ferry service.”

SEC. 8. Section 308(b) of the Rail Passenger Service Act of 1970 (45 U.S.C. 548(b)), relating to reports to the Congress, is amended by striking out “January 15” and inserting in lieu thereof “February 15”.

SEC. 9. Section 401(c) of the Rail Passenger Service Act of 1970 (45 U.S.C. 561(c)), relating to the prohibition against other persons conducting intercity rail passenger service, is amended by striking out “No railroad or any other person” and inserting in lieu thereof “Except as provided in section 305(b) of this Act concerning auto-ferry service, no railroad or any other person”.

84 Stat. 1336.
45 USC 564.

Auto-ferry
service, preemp-
tion of State law.
84 Stat. 1332;
86 Stat. 228.

86 Stat. 228.

Ante, p. 549.

Facilities and services agreements.

84 Stat. 1335;
86 Stat. 229.

Disagreement procedures.

Ante, p. 550.

Intercity passenger train preference.

80 Stat. 383.

Accelerated speeds.

SEC. 10. Section 402 of the Rail Passenger Service Act of 1970 (45 U.S.C. 562), relating to facility and service agreements, is amended—

(1) by inserting immediately after the second sentence of subsection (a) the following new sentence: "In fixing just and reasonable compensation for the provision of services ordered by the Commission under the preceding sentence, the Commission shall, in fixing compensation in excess of incremental costs, consider quality of service as a major factor in determining the amount (if any) of such compensation."; and

(2) by adding at the end thereof the following new subsections:
"(d) (1) If the Corporation and a railroad are unable to agree upon terms for the sale to the Corporation of property (including interests in property) owned by the railroad and required for the construction of tracks or other facilities necessary to provide intercity rail passenger service, the Corporation may apply to the Commission for an order establishing the need of the Corporation for the property at issue and requiring the conveyance thereof from the railroad to the Corporation on reasonable terms and conditions, including just compensation. Unless the Commission finds that—

"(A) conveyance of the property to the Corporation would significantly impair the ability of the railroad to carry out its obligations as a common carrier; and

"(B) the obligations of the Corporation to provide modern, efficient, and economical rail passenger service can adequately be met by the acquisition of alternative property (including interests in property) which is available for sale on reasonable terms to the Corporation, or available to the Corporation by the exercise of its authority under section 305 (d) of this Act;

the need of the Corporation for the property shall be deemed to be established and the Commission shall order the conveyance of the property to the Corporation on such reasonable terms and conditions as it may prescribe, including just compensation.

"(2) The Commission shall expedite proceedings under this subsection and, in any event, issue its order within one hundred and twenty days from receipt of the application from the Corporation. If just compensation has not been determined on the date of the order, the order shall require, as part of just compensation, interest at the rate of 6 per centum per annum from the date prescribed for conveyance until just compensation is paid.

"(e) (1) Except in an emergency, intercity passenger trains operated by or on behalf of the Corporation shall be accorded preference over freight trains in the use of any given line of track, junction, or crossing, unless the Secretary has issued an order to the contrary in accordance with paragraph (2) of this subsection.

"(2) Any railroad whose rights with regard to freight train operation are affected by paragraph (1) of this subsection may file an application with the Secretary requesting appropriate relief. If, after hearing under section 553 of title 5 of the United States Code, the Secretary finds that adherence to such paragraph (1) will materially lessen the quality of freight service provided to shippers, the Secretary shall issue an order fixing rights of trains, on such terms and conditions as are just and reasonable.

"(f) If, upon request of the Corporation, a railroad refuses to permit accelerated speeds by trains operated by or on behalf of the Corporation, the Corporation may apply to the Secretary for an order requiring the railroad to permit such accelerated speeds. The Secretary shall make findings as to whether such accelerated speeds are unsafe or otherwise impracticable, and with respect to the nature and extent

of improvements to track, signal systems, and other facilities that would be required to make such accelerated speeds safe and practicable. After hearing, the Secretary shall issue an order fixing maximum permissible speeds of Corporation trains, on such terms and conditions as he shall find to be just and reasonable.”

SEC. 11. (a) Section 403 of the Rail Passenger Service Act of 1970 (45 U.S.C. 563), relating to new service, is amended by adding at the end thereof the following new subsection:

Experimental
routes.
84 Stat. 1335.

“(d) The Corporation shall initiate not less than one experimental route each year, such route to be designated by the Secretary, and shall operate such route for not less than two years. After such two-year period, the Secretary shall terminate such route if he finds that it has attracted insufficient patronage to serve the public convenience and necessity, or he may designate such route as a part of the basic system.”

(b) Section 404(b) of the Rail Passenger Service Act of 1970 (45 U.S.C. 564(b)), relating to discontinuance of service, is amended—

Discontinuance
of service.

(1) by striking out “July 1, 1973” in paragraph (1) and inserting in lieu thereof “July 1, 1974”;

(2) by amending paragraph (2) to read as follows:

“(2) Except as otherwise provided in this paragraph and in section 403(a) of this Act, service beyond that prescribed for the basic system undertaken by the Corporation upon its own initiative may be discontinued at any time. No such service undertaken by the Corporation on or after January 1, 1973, shall be discontinued until the expiration of the one-year period beginning on the date of enactment of this sentence.”; and

86 Stat. 229.

(3) by striking out “July 1, 1973” in paragraph (3) and inserting in lieu thereof “July 1, 1974”.

SEC. 12. Section 601 of the Rail Passenger Service Act of 1970 (45 U.S.C. 601), relating to Federal grants, is amended to read as follows:

“SEC. 601. AUTHORIZATION FOR APPROPRIATIONS.

“(a) There are authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary for the benefit of the Corporation in fiscal year 1971, \$40,000,000, and in subsequent fiscal years a total of \$334,300,000. Funds appropriated pursuant to such authorization shall be made available to the Secretary during the fiscal year for which appropriated and shall remain available until expended. Such sums shall be paid by the Secretary to the Corporation for expenditure by it in accordance with spending plans approved by Congress at the time of appropriation and general guidelines established annually by the Secretary.

“(b) (1) Whenever the Corporation submits any budget estimate or request to the President, the Department of Transportation, or the Office of Management and Budget, it shall concurrently transmit a copy of that estimate or request to the Congress.

“(2) Whenever the Corporation submits any legislative recommendation, proposed testimony, or comments on legislation to the President, the Department of Transportation, or the Office of Management and Budget, it shall concurrently transmit a copy thereof to the Congress. No officer or agency of the United States shall have any authority to require the Corporation to submit its legislative recommendations, proposed testimony, or comments on legislation to any officer or agency of the United States for approval, comments, or review, prior to the submission of such recommendations, testimony, or comments to the Congress.”

SEC. 13. Section 602 of the Rail Passenger Service Act of 1970 (45 U.S.C. 602), relating to guarantee of loans, is amended—

Loan guaran-
tees.

(1) by inserting “and with the approval of the Secretary of the Treasury,” immediately after “prescribe,” in subsection (a);

(2) by amending the first sentence of subsection (d) to read as follows: "The aggregate unpaid principal amount of securities, obligations, or loans outstanding at any one time, which are guaranteed by the Secretary under this section, may not exceed \$500,000,000."; and

(3) by adding at the end thereof the following new subsection: "(g) Notwithstanding any other provision of this Act, a guarantee may not be made of any security, obligation, or loan, if the nature of such security, obligation, or loan is such that the income therefrom is not includable in gross income for the purposes of chapter 1 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954."

68A Stat. 5.
26 USC 1.
84 Stat. 1339.

SEC. 14. Section 801 of the Rail Passenger Service Act of 1970 (45 U.S.C. 641) is amended to read as follows:

"SEC. 801. ADEQUACY OF SERVICE

"(a) The Commission shall promulgate, within 60 days from the date of enactment of the Amtrak Improvement Act of 1973, and shall from time to time revise, such regulations as it considers necessary to provide adequate service, equipment, tracks, and other facilities for quality intercity rail passenger service. The Corporation may contract with railroads or with regional transportation agencies for the improvement of service, equipment, tracks and other facilities necessary to meet such regulations promulgated by the Commission. In the event of a failure to agree, the Commission shall by rule establish procedures for allocating between the Corporation and a railroad any costs required to be incurred to meet the regulations establishing adequate service, equipment, tracks, and other facilities.

Penalty.

"(b) Any person who violates a regulation issued under this section shall be subject to a civil penalty of not to exceed \$500 for each violation. Each day a violation continues shall constitute a separate offense."

Approved November 3, 1973.

Public Law 93-147

AN ACT

November 3, 1973
[H. R. 689]

To amend section 712 of title 18 of the United States Code, to prohibit persons attempting to collect their own debts from misusing names in order to convey the false impression that any agency of the Federal Government is involved in such collection.

Debt collection.
Use of Federal
symbols, pro-
hibition.
73 Stat. 570.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That (a) section 712 of title 18 of the United States Code is amended to read as follows:

"§ 712. Misuse of names, words, emblems, or insignia

"Whoever, in the course of collecting or aiding in the collection of private debts or obligations, or being engaged in furnishing private police, investigation, or other private detective services, uses or employs in any communication, correspondence, notice, advertisement, or circular the words 'national', 'Federal', or 'United States', the initials 'U.S.', or any emblem, insignia, or name, for the purpose of conveying and in a manner reasonably calculated to convey the false impression that such communication is from a department, agency, bureau, or instrumentality of the United States or in any manner represents the United States, shall be fined not more than \$1,000 or imprisoned not more than one year, or both."