

Structure for The States for Passenger Rail Coalition

Name

The States for Passenger Rail Coalition (hereafter referred to as “Coalition”.)

Mission

The Coalition’s mission is to promote the development, implementation and expansion of intercity passenger rail services with involvement and support from state governments.

Principles

- Intercity passenger rail, and especially high speed rail, represent viable and attractive transportation options.
- The states are, and will continue to be, the primary agencies responsible for implementing new or enhanced intercity passenger rail service.
- Many states are working to develop rail services, with resulting goals and needs that are remarkably similar from corridor to corridor. States should unite to leverage common interests and be sure that these needs are fulfilled in all areas of the country that can benefit from passenger rail.
- Development and expansion of intercity passenger rail services, especially high speed rail services, must feature a strong federal financing role in partnerships with states.
- A united group of states may find benefits by sharing information on policy, initiatives, technical developments and innovative implementation methods.
- A coalition offers a centralized forum to interact with stakeholders and advocacy groups to share information and offer direction in support of intercity passenger rail.

Membership

The membership of this group shall be open to Departments or Agencies of the States of the United States and the District of Columbia in which the official transportation responsibility for the state or territory is lodged.

Member States

Member States are those who have signed an Agreement to formally participate in the Coalition. Only Member States shall be permitted to vote on issues affecting the Coalition.

Interested States

Interested States are eligible state Departments or Agencies who express interest in the Coalition and its activities, but who have not signed an official Agreement to join the Coalition. Interested States shall not be permitted to vote on issues affecting the Coalition.

Affiliates

Affiliates are local or regional governmental agencies and their officials concerned with intercity passenger rail other than the Member States. Affiliates have the privilege of attending meetings and taking part in discussions and receiving all products but are not permitted to vote on issues affecting the Coalition.

Dues/Support for the Coalition

To support the operations of the Coalition, each Member State and Affiliate shall be asked to contribute dues, in a sum agreed to by the Member States. These dues may be revisited annually, and can be modified upon approval of two-thirds of the Member States. In addition to dues, each Member State may be asked to provide staff or other resources, as deemed appropriate by the Member States, to support the Coalition and its activities.

Coalition Officers

The Coalition shall elect a Member State to serve as Chair, Vice Chair and Secretary-Treasurer of the Coalition. No state shall be elected to serve in more than one of these roles during any term, nor shall any state serve in the same role for more than two consecutive years. Election of Officers shall occur every other year, or as necessary to fill vacancies. The responsibilities of these officers are as follows:

- **Chair:** The Chair shall organize and preside over all formal meetings of the Coalition and shall be the primary point of contact for transmission of Coalition information/positions.
- **Vice-Chair:** The Vice-Chair shall assume the duties of the Chair in the event that the Chair is unable to fulfill his/her obligations at any point during the term, or should a vacancy in the Chair occur before the normal end of the term.
- **Secretary-Treasurer:** The Secretary-Treasurer shall have oversight of all Coalition funds and financial transactions, and shall report on the financial status of the Coalition and use of Coalition funds at least annually, or as requested by Member States.

Election/Term of Officers

The Chair, Vice-Chair and Secretary-Treasurer shall be elected by a simple majority of Member States every two years.

Executive Committee

The Executive Committee shall consist of the Chair, Vice-Chair and Secretary-Treasurer.

Steering Committee

The Steering Committee shall consist of one member from each Member State. The Chief Executive of each Member State shall name its respective Steering Committee member. This member shall be committed to providing prompt response on Coalition issues and work products (letters, policies, etc), and shall have the ability to act in an official capacity for the State he/she represents.

Hiring of Outside Consultants

The Coalition may hire outside consultants to assist in Coalition activities. The Steering Committee will be responsible for recommending any consultant. The selected consultant must receive the approval of at least two-thirds of the Member States.

Development of Formal Coalition Positions

The Coalition may develop and publicize policy statements, position papers, letters, testimony or other forms of documentation to formally disseminate Coalition views. Formal positions shall be adopted by a two-thirds majority of the Member States.

Review Process

To the extent possible, Steering Committee members will be provided at least two weeks to comment on proposed Coalition products.

All formal products of the Coalition, including but not limited to letters, policy statements and written testimony, must be provided to the Steering Committee for review and approval prior to dissemination outside of the Coalition. Products disseminated to the Steering Committee for review and approval will clearly indicate a date by which a response is requested. Provided that at least two weeks of response time has been given, if a Member State or has not responded within this timeframe, it will be assumed that the Member State is in agreement with the proposal. This does not prevent a Member State from responding after such deadline, but will allow products to move forward, if necessary. Member State comments received after a specified deadline will be addressed, to the extent possible.

Expedited Review

There may be times when the Coalition will be required to act in a timeframe that does not lend itself to a full two week review. In these circumstances, the proposed product or position will be sent to the Steering Committee allowing as much review time as possible, but the Chair may act on behalf of the Coalition with the approval of the Executive Committee provided that, in the timeframe available, comments received from the Member States are addressed and incorporated, to the extent possible.

Responding to Member State and Affiliate Comments on Proposed Products

As outlined above, Member States and Affiliates will be provided an opportunity to comment on all formal products produced by the Coalition. If a Member State or Affiliate has comments on a product, the Member State or Affiliate will provide these comments, at a minimum, to the Chair and the product originator (if other than the Chair). All comments shall be compiled by the product originator and, if comments materially affect the document, a revised product addressing such changes will be sent to the Steering Committee for final approval. To the extent possible, the Steering Committee will be allowed a reasonable timeframe to respond to any proposed modifications.

Coalition Meetings

Coalition meetings shall be held at such time and at such locations and through such means (e.g., face-to-face, teleconference, phone, etc.) as agreed upon by the Member States.

Annual Meeting

The first meeting of each calendar year shall be designated as the “annual meeting”. Coalition officers shall be elected at this meeting. In addition, there shall be a report from the Secretary-Treasurer on the financial condition of the Coalition, and the dues structure may be revisited.

Meeting Attendance

Coalition meetings are open to all Member States and, Interested States and Affiliates only. Others may be invited to attend or participate as appropriate to the meeting agenda.

Voting at Meetings

Votes from the Member States may be cast at any meeting held by the Coalition provided that more than half of the Member States are present. If more than half of the Member States are not present, those in attendance may vote to send out a ballot to the Steering Committee, which would then require a two-thirds vote to approve.

Distribution of Meeting Materials

The Chair of the Coalition shall coordinate preparation of the meeting agenda and dissemination of meeting materials to the Member States and Affiliates. To the extent possible, Member States and Affiliates will be given at least one week to review materials to be covered at Coalition meetings.

Withdrawal from the Coalition

A Member State or Affiliate may withdraw from the Coalition upon written notice from the Chief Executive of the Member State or Affiliate. If more than half of the current dues cycle remains, a State or Affiliate may receive a refund of dues paid equal to the [State's] *its* share of the Coalition's unobligated balance of funds at the time of withdrawal, not to exceed 50 percent of any dues the withdrawing Member State or Affiliate has contributed in the current dues cycle.

Disbanding of the Coalition

The Coalition may be disbanded at any time with the consent of the majority of the Member States. If the Coalition is disbanded, any uncommitted funds shall be returned to each Member State or Affiliate in a proportion equal to the share of funds contributed by each Member State or Affiliate.