



STATEWIDE MEETING
March 8, 2025



WELCOME!

AAO Advocacy Recap

Results from a busy February



Mitch Radakovich

Board Chair

Cincinnati, OH



A Quick Review...

The Big Budgets

• **Transportation**

- House Bill 54
- Amendments Due 2/13
- Sub Bill Expected 2/18
- Due by 3/31

• **Operating**

- Being Drafted
- Amendments Due 3/14
- Expected to Pass 4/9
- Due by 6/30

- Testimony to be heard in Finance Committee and 13 others.
- Changed from past General Assemblies.
- Helpful information can be found at:

isc.ohio.gov – Budget Central



All Aboard Ohio Priorities

- Rejoin Midwest Interstate Passenger Rail Commission
- Establish an Office of Passenger Rail
- Fully fund Corridor ID Step 2 for 3C&D, Cleveland – Toledo – Detroit, and Midwest Connect

Statehouse Testimony

RECAP: ALL THESE GROUPS TOLD OHIO LAWMAKERS TO SUPPORT PASSENGER RAIL

February has been incredibly big for passenger rail in Ohio



ALL ABOARD OHIO

Testified for passenger rail on 2-12-2025

"We urge your support for an amendment to House Bill 54 which would reinstate and fund Ohio's membership in the Midwest Interstate Passenger Rail Commission"



THE ABILITY CENTER OF GREATER TOLEDO

Testified for passenger rail on 2-12-2025

Passenger rail is a game-changer for people with disabilities, older adults, and seniors who need reliable, accessible, efficient transportation. But to make it a reality, Ohio must uphold its commitment to expanding and strengthening these vital connections. I urge the committee to not only **support HB 54** and **Ohio's reentry into the MIPRC** but also **prioritize increased funding for passenger rail expansion**. These investments will create a more connected, inclusive, and economically vibrant Ohio.

ALL ABOARD OHIO

Testified for passenger rail on 2-19-2025

MID-OHIO REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

Testified for passenger rail on 2-19-2025





Testimony Process

- Prepare written remarks in advance
- Coordinate with committee chair to schedule testimony
- Speech 😊💧
- Questions and Comments from Committee



Questions from Committee

- Why did we leave MIPRC to start?
- What are good things you learned at MIPRC?
- Is there an estimated cost for the corridor ID projects?

Comments from Committee

Comment of the day:

“10 years ago, this was seen as a dead-on-arrival idea. It seemed illogical. 10 years ago, I felt the same way. ...

Post covid, our lives are so much mobile. Sitting on the train for a trip which may be longer now makes sense as you can use that time for productivity.”



Daniels (R) New Franklin
Chair, House Transportation

Passenger Rail Day of Advocacy

The beginning, not the end.



Our Goals

- Engage specific legislators – party leadership in both chambers, members of the Finance and Transportation Committees in both chambers, and new members.
- Ask specifically for their feedback – concerns, questions, thoughts.

The Coalition



Results

- 54 meetings with Senators and Reps
- Nearly universal positivity
- Bringing awareness
- Tracking support
 - Who are our allies
 - Who needs more pushing?



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Our Literature

- 16 page Advocacy Booklet



Corridor ID Selected Route
3C&D Corridor
Connects Ohio's major cities and the communities in between: Cincinnati, Dayton, Columbus, and Cleveland. 3C&D brings Bengals and Browns fans closer together following along highways 75, 70, and 71 - but no driving needed.
Sponsor: Ohio Rail Development Commission (ORDC)
Industry Partner: HDR, INC
*Some stops have not yet been defined

Corridor ID Selected Route
Midwest Connect Corridor
A seamless journey through the heart of the Midwest, connecting vibrant cities and charming communities: Chicago, Fort Wayne, Lima, Columbus, and Pittsburgh. The Midwest Connect Corridor brings together the best of the region. Whether you're a business traveler, a student, or an adventurer, this corridor promises a smooth ride between the Midwest's bustling urban centers.
Sponsor: Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission (MORPC)
Industry Partner: HNTB Corporation
*Some stops have not yet been defined

Corridor ID Selected Route
Cleveland, Toledo, Detroit Corridor
Bridging the industrial powerhouses of Ohio and Michigan: Cleveland, Toledo, and Detroit. The Cleveland-Toledo-Detroit Corridor is designed to enhance connectivity and provide a sustainable transportation solution for both major cities and the smaller communities along the route.
Sponsor: Ohio Rail Development Commission (ORDC)
Industry Partner: HDR, INC
*Some stops have not yet been defined

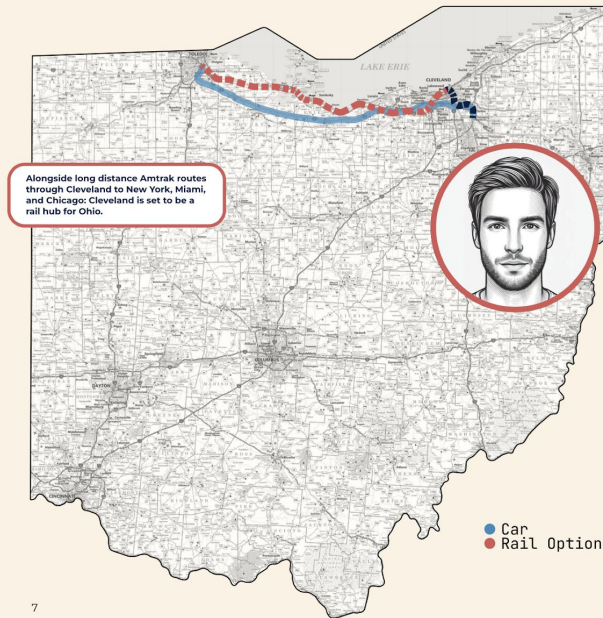
Our Literature

Map Courtesy of ODOT

Real Ohio Resident Quotes:

A Father In Macedonia

"I'm a new Ohio resident and I would love a safe, fast, and inexpensive option to get between cities without a car. I think better rail connectivity in the midwest will lead to better economic outcomes in the region as well."



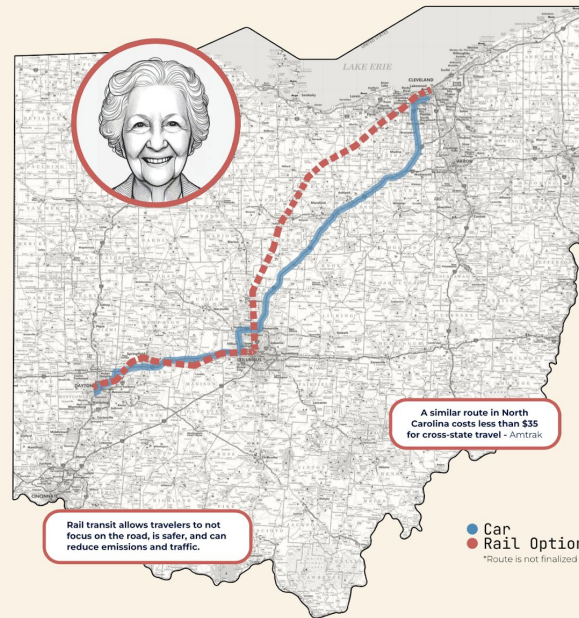
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Map Courtesy of ODOT

Real Ohio Resident Quotes:

A Grandmother In Dayton

"My grandchildren live in Cleveland, so rail service there would be extremely helpful to me, especially as I age and don't want to drive the 3+ hours. Thank you for the work you are doing to make that possible."



8

Our Literature

Economic Impact:

Ohio Estimates Show Major Economic Impact

Amtrak's Connects US corridor vision estimated an annual economic impact of the 3C&D corridor at \$130M with \$2.6B in economic activity from capital investments and 170-320 ongoing jobs. For the Cleveland Detroit route, this was estimated at nearly \$100M and \$4.5B, respectively. Job creation and retention is a key focus as well. A 2013 Business Case Study for the Chicago to Columbus rail corridor estimated that construction and ongoing operations and maintenance of the rail service were estimated to spur the creation of 12,000 construction jobs and 26,000 permanent jobs over 30 years.

\$230M+

Estimated ongoing annual impact to Ohio's economy from 3C&D and Cleveland, Toledo, Detroit Corridors - Amtrak Connects US

Passenger Rail Has Benefited Economies In Other States

Passenger rail has significantly benefited the economies of states like Missouri and North Carolina whose routes resemble those planned for Ohio: Midwest Connect and 3C&D respectively.

In Missouri, the Missouri River Runner Amtrak service has been a vital contributor to the state's economy. It generates approximately \$208 million in annual economic activity, supports 1,250 jobs, and brings in \$22 million in annual tax revenue. The service also boosts tourism, particularly in small communities like Hermann, where local wineries and businesses benefit from increased visitor spending.

North Carolina's passenger rail system, including the NC By Train service, contributes over \$128 million to the state's economy and supports 430 jobs. The rail network enhances mobility, reduces road congestion, and provides expanded travel options for both urban and rural communities. The state's rail system also supports rail tourism, attracting approximately 410,000 visitors annually.

86%

86% believe in the importance of a strong American passenger rail system - Amtrak

81%

81% of residents welcome passenger rail service locally - Amtrak

1:5

For every dollar into public transit, \$5 returns to the economy - APTA

2.8%

Only 2.8% of ODOT's current budget goes toward public transit

5.1B

Total possible funding for Corridor ID passenger rail programs from the IDA that states are eligible for

Photo Courtesy of Amtrak



OUR CHANCE FOR PASSENGER RAIL IS NOW

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Our Literature

Next Steps:

How Ohio Can Make Passenger Rail a Reality

1. Rejoin the Midwest Interstate Passenger Rail Commission (MIPRC)

MIPRC brings together state leaders from across the region on a bipartisan basis to promote and support existing and new passenger rail development in the Midwest. Rejoining MIPRC lays groundwork to **interconnect with neighboring state's rail projects**. MIPRC's current members are Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, North Dakota and Wisconsin.

2. Complete the Corridor ID Process

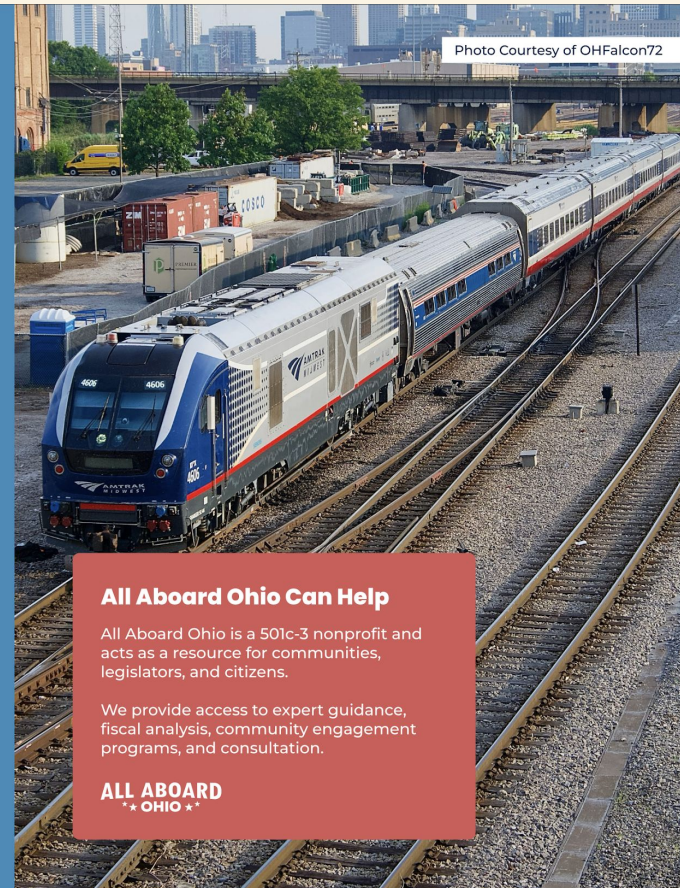
The Corridor ID program will make sure Ohio has a clear picture of what expanding passenger rail means for the economy of our state. **The federal government has allocated millions of dollars to help states like Ohio develop and study passenger rail routes** in 2025 and 2026 with minimal commitments from state budgets. By completing Corridor ID we'll get a clear picture at what will be required to introduce passenger rail service, how it will drive economic development, reduce congestion, and promote travel and tourism across the state.

3. Support Funding of the Ohio Rail Development Commission

As Ohio Rail Development Commission (ORDC) mission to represent the interests of passenger rail service in the state of Ohio grows more important, ORDC will provide robust administrative support for the Corridor ID Program. ORDC should be empowered to embrace its mission of **ensuring effective management of passenger rail projects and driving economic development** that benefits residents and businesses alike.

Ohio should continue essential funding for ORDC and encourage the governor to fill the vacant seat representing the interests of passenger rail on the commission.

13



All Aboard Ohio Can Help

All Aboard Ohio is a 501c-3 nonprofit and acts as a resource for communities, legislators, and citizens.

We provide access to expert guidance, fiscal analysis, community engagement programs, and consultation.

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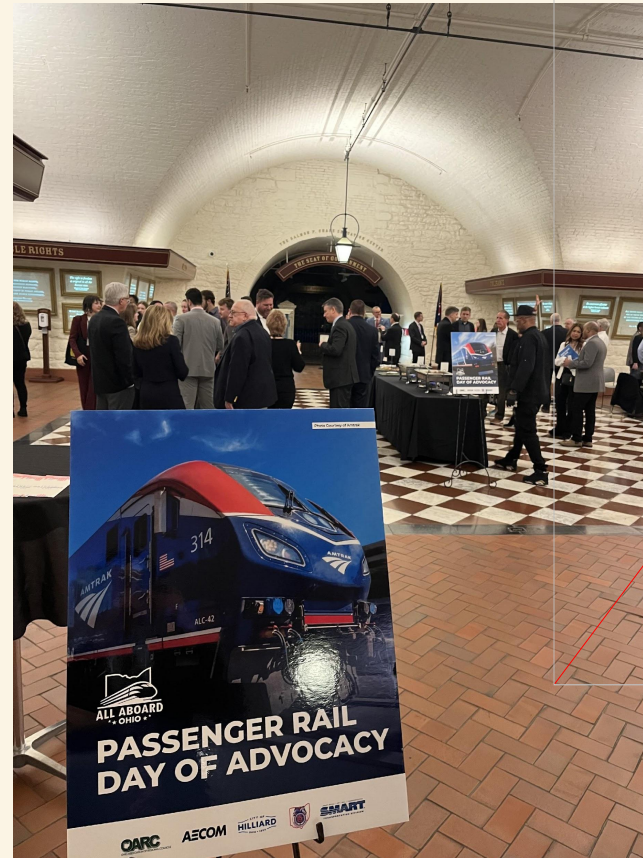


Our Pitch – What Worked

- Using visual aides to pitch our message
- Maps rock
- Keeping it casual

Reception

- Over 100 in attendance
- Legislators and Aides
- Conversation lasting over 2 hours!



Big News!

Our advocacy is making waves

Transportation Budget

- Passed in the House
- Includes MIPRC amendment!
- **Next Step:** Senate



Ohio Chamber of Commerce

- Endorsed Corridor ID and passenger rail
- Potentially first time in 50 years



"Ohio rails are important to the transportation of goods and provide an opportunity for increased passenger rail in our state. **We also encourage funding of step two for the 3C&D rail line, Ohio's portion of the Cleveland Toledo and Detroit rail line and Ohio's portion of the Midwest connect rail line.** The step two study is needed to evaluate the use of passenger rail to meet Ohio's future, transportation needs."

Matt MaLaren
Ohio Chamber of Commerce





Step 2 Funding

- In testimony, Matt Dietrich, ORDC Director shared:



Step 2 Funding

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**ORDC plans on covering Phase 2 costs
for both 3C+D and CTD**



Step 2 Funding

- In testimony, Matt Dietrich, ORDC Director shared:

ORDC plans on covering Phase 2 costs for both 3C+D and CTD

- Press release planned following budget



~In Summary~

- Our advocacy is working
- We are driven to keep the momentum through 2025 and beyond

What's Next

Its only March...



AAO Fundraising Strategy

- Business Involvement
- Goal: 1000 small businesses signed on
- Institutional Support
 - We are doing work that will benefit corporations, hospitals, universities
 - We are requesting their support in return



AAO Membership Strategy

- Emphasis on growth
- Focus on our chapters
 - More funding = more resources to do cool stuff 😊
- University sub-chapters
- Abundance of volunteer opportunities



AAO Advocacy Strategy

- We need YOU!
- In progress: advocacy guide
 - Frequently updated with current asks and actions
 - Goal: AAO as an advocacy powerhouse

Announcements

News from Across the State

Southwest OH

- New Chapter Leads in Cincinnati!



Andrew Hesch



Ryan Minnich

Southwest OH

- Volunteer Opportunity
- Piloting our presence
- March 15th 10a-3p
- Calling our Dayton and Cincy chapters!

SPECIAL EDITION

Ohio Valley Preservation Corp

LAKOTA WEST TRAIN SHOW

MEET THE FOUNDERS OF THE
NEWEST PRESERVATION CORP!



ESTABLISHED
2025

Meet some of the founders of the Ohio Valley Preservation Corp and learn about our projects and ambitions! See some of our artifacts in person and sign up to become a member!

DETAILS

Where:
Lakota West High School, 5050 Tylersville Rd,
West Chester Ohio, 45069

When:
March 15th, 2025, 10AM-3PM

MODELS FOR SALE!

Stop by our table to get great prices on model trains and a hands-on look at some of our projects!



Mark Your Calendar...

2025 Annual Meeting

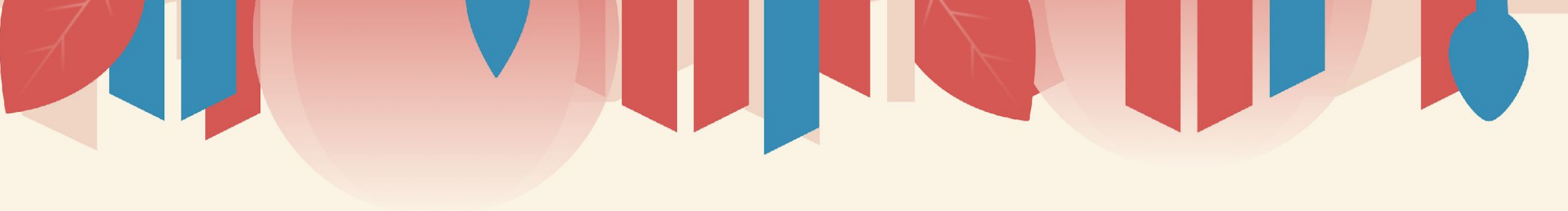
- Columbus Ohio
- Saturday, July 12, 2025
- Potential Reception on Friday, July 11

Coming soon...

- Race to Chicago
- May 2025

- SW vs. NW/NE
- Which train arrives to Chi first?





Join Our Slack



In Remembrance



David E Shreiner

In Remembrance



Michael Conner



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