What the 2020 Election Results Mean for Passenger Trains and Transit

OneRail Coalition
+
Rail Passengers Association
The 2020 Election + Passenger Trains

November 18th
3:00 PM Eastern

- 3:00 PM – Introduction – Joe Aiello – Director of Resource Development, Rail Passengers Association
- 3:05 PM – The 117th Congress + Transportation – Sean Jeans-Gail – Vice President, Policy + Gov’t Affairs, Rail Passengers Association
- 3:20 PM – What the Biden Administration Means for Trains – Anne Canby – Director, OneRail Coalition
- 3:35 – 3:45 PM – Q&A – Canby, Jeans-Gail and RPA President Jim Mathews answer questions from members (prioritize those submitted ahead of time, field questions from the chat box if time)

Please mute your microphones and turn off your cameras. Thank you!
Introducing the 117th Congress: Key Committees and Leadership Roles

Sean Jeans-Gail | VP of Gov’t Affairs + Policy
Rail Passengers Association
Washington, DC
Control of Senate will be decided January 5th
  • President-Elect Biden’s ability to influence infrastructure hinges on Georgia

House Democratic majority erodes, setting up confrontation between centrists and progressives
  • House GOP eye majority in 2022

Key legislative opportunities/hurdles:
  • Fiscal 2021 Continuing Resolution
  • Surface Transportation Reauthorization
  • COVID-19 response package
  • Fiscal 2022 appropriations bills
  • Debt limit
Senate Still in Play

Democrats: 48
Republicans: 50
Senate Still in Play

• Republicans have a 50-48 advantage, but control of the chamber will come down to Jan. 5 runoffs for two Georgia seats

• If Republicans win just one of the Georgia seats, then Mitch McConnell (KY) will remain majority leader

• If Democrats win both seats, then Vice President Kamala Harris would break a 50-50 tie in their favor
  • In this scenario Democrats would have full control of government, albeit by razor-thin margins
  • Power-sharing agreement between Democrats and Republicans in Senate would be necessary
Senate Turnover

**Defeated Incumbents**
Cory Gardner (R-Colo.) defeated by Hickenlooper
Doug Jones (D-Ala.) defeated by Tuberville
Martha McSally (R-Ariz.) defeated by Kelly

**Did Not Seek Re-election in 2020**
Lamar Alexander (R-Tenn.) replaced by Hagerty
Mike Enzi (R-Wyo.) replaced by Lummis
Pat Roberts (R-Kan.) replaced by Marshall
Tom Udall (D-N.M.) replaced by Lujan

**Notable Reelections**
Susan Collins (R-Maine) defeated Gideon
Tom Thillis (R-N.C.) defeated Cunningham
Steve Daines (R-Mont.) defeated Bullock
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Democratic Majority in House Narrows

• Democrats underperformed down ballot, with Republicans protecting incumbents and adding seats

• Speaker Nancy Pelosi of California will have less room to maneuver
  • Several centrist members added in the 2018 “Blue Wave” were defeated, flipping back to GOP control
  • More progressives have been elected and are expected to add additional pressure

• Tension could build ahead of 2022 midterm elections
  • The party in control of the White House historically has lost seats in midterms
House Transportation Leadership

Rep. DeFazio (D-OR),
Chair

Rep. Graves (R-GA),
Ranking Member
Rail Subcommittee: Campaign for Gavel

• Several lawmakers are vying to succeed Chair Dan Lipinski (D-IL)
  • Albio Sires (NJ), John Garamendi (CA), Donald Payne (NJ), and Tom Malinowski (NJ) among others.
• Sam Graves (R-AR) likely to continue as ranking member
Appropriations: Three-Way Campaign for Gavel

- Three lawmakers are vying to succeed retiring Chairwoman Nita Lowey (D-N.Y.)
  - Marcy Kaptur (Ohio), the next most senior Democrat on the panel, faces challenges from Rosa DeLauro (Conn.) and Debbie Wasserman Schultz ( Fla.)
- Kay Granger (R-Texas) likely to continue as ranking member
Mixed Results for Rail on the Ballot

Key Wins for Rail Transit

• **Measure RR** passed by Bay Area voters in California, averting a fiscal crisis for Caltrain by creating a dedicated source of funding.

• Austinites overwhelmingly passed **Proposition A**, greenlighting a $7 billion mass transit plan.

Some Measures Defeated

• Multnomah County (Oregon) voters shot down the regional transportation plan **Measure 26-218** by a vote of 58-42.

• **Gwinnett County transit referendum** to add buses, BRT corridors, and extend a MARTA line lost by the slimmest of margins.
Key Dates on the Legislative Calendar

• **This Week**: House leadership elections
• **Dec. 11**: Current Continuing Resolution (CR) expires
• **Dec. 14**: Electoral College delegations meet and vote
• **Jan. 3, 2021**: 117th Congress officially convenes (likely to shift to Monday, Jan. 4)
• **Jan. 5**: Georgia Senate runoff elections
• **Jan. 20**: Presidential inauguration

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• **???:** COVID-19 supplemental funding bill

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• **Sept. 30**: One-year extension of surface transportation law expires
• **Sept. 30**: Fiscal Year 2021 budget expires
The Biden Administration + Infrastructure: 
What “Amtrak Joe” Means for Rail

Anne Canby, Director
OneRail Coalition

www.OneRail.org | FB: @OneRailCoalition
President-Elect Joe Biden and Passenger Trains

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President-Elect Joe Biden and Passenger Trains

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• How can advocates capitalize on President-Elect Biden’s strong support for passenger rail to secure wins at the state and federal level?
President-Elect Joe Biden and Passenger Trains

• What can a Biden Administration do through executive orders/administratively to promote trains?

• What legislative opportunities will the Biden Administration have to advance its vision for passenger rail?

• How can advocates capitalize on President-Elect Biden’s strong support for passenger rail to secure wins at the federal or state level?

• How can passengers leverage “Amtrak Joe” to increase public support for Amtrak?
Answering Your Questions

Jim Mathews, President & CEO
Sean Jeans-Gail, VP – Gov’t Affairs
Rail Passengers Association

Anne Canby– Director
OneRail
Answering your questions

Q: We know ‘Amtrak Joe’ can’t do it all on his own. How does the makeup of the Congress hinder what we advocates are fighting for?
Answering your questions

Q: How can we put pressure on the new administration to include more rural voices specifically for passenger rail?

-Christopher
Answering your questions

Q: Any rumors going around as to who may end up being the Secretary of Transportation when former VP Joe Biden becomes President?

- Barry
Answering your questions

Q: What are the key ways members can support the work of the Association through the transitional period?
Thank You!

Limited Edition shirts and masks available now in the new Rail Passengers store! A great gift for any passenger rail supporter, this is a one-time print collector's shirt and mask featuring a classic association motto [BIT.LY/rpamerch](http://BIT.LY/rpamerch)