

AMS  
9/24/21

RESOLUTION NO. 2021- 142

A RESOLUTION OF THE GOVERNING BODY OF THE CITY OF ROCK SPRINGS, WYOMING SUPPORTING AMTRAK PASSENGER RAIL EXPANSION IN THE CITY OF ROCK SPRINGS AND SOUTHWEST WYOMING AND RESTORATION OF THE PIONEER ROUTE.

WHEREAS, the City of Rock Springs, Sweetwater County, and Wyoming generally is underserved by long-distance intercity passenger rail options and Amtrak's recent service announcement and accompanying Connect Us plan service map fails to recognize that shortcoming and bring passenger rail service to long overlooked communities in much of rural America, including the Greater Northwest, defined as Washington, Oregon, Idaho, Utah, Colorado, Wyoming, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, and portions of Minnesota and Wisconsin; and,

WHEREAS, for decades, the citizens of Rock Springs have not had decent access to passenger rail service; and,

WHEREAS, the significant economic impact intercity passenger rail service can provide has fueled interest at the local, county, and state level in the Greater Northwest region to join forces to find innovative ways to provide transportation alternatives to citizens; and,

WHEREAS, long-distance passenger train routes are ideal for connecting major urban areas with each other and with smaller cities and communities—many in rural areas—which are becoming more isolated as some regional airline and intercity bus services disappear; and,

WHEREAS, passenger rail has multiple service capabilities that airlines cannot match, a single rail line can simultaneously serve local, regional, and long-distance travel needs safely transporting some passengers long distances while carrying local passengers to work, medical providers, or social events; and,

WHEREAS, passenger rail serves a variety of travelers needs in places where other modes of travel are not available or less convenient including those travelers who cannot drive, prefer not to drive in inclement weather or otherwise prefer the choice of rail travel; and,

WHEREAS, passenger rail provides multiple environmental benefits as one of the greenest modes of ground transportation, such as approximately three times more efficient in greenhouse gas emissions per passenger as travel by car; and,

WHEREAS, in 2008, Congress directed Amtrak to review several routes across the Greater Northwest as part of the Railroad Safety Enhancement Act of 2008 and that study proposed restoring the Pioneer route from Omaha to Cheyenne, Rawlins, Rock Springs, Green River, Evanston, Pocatello, Boise, and Portland; and,

WHEREAS, President Biden has expressed interest in “sparkling the second great railroad revolution.”

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE GOVERNING BODY OF THE CITY OF ROCK SPRINGS:

Section 1. That it shall support restoration of daily Amtrak passenger rail service on the old Pioneer route from Omaha through to Cheyenne, Rawlins, Rock Springs, Green River, Evanston, Pocatello, Boise, and Portland by:

- a. Advocating to a bipartisan group in Congress representing this region to work toward restoring passenger rail service to the Greater Northwest;
- b. Requesting passage of legislation in the 117<sup>th</sup> Congress that direct the Secretary of Transportation to study discontinued long-distance Amtrak routes and determine if they should be restored to the national system;
- c. Supporting passage of the Interstate Rail Compacts Advancement Act of 2021 by the 117<sup>th</sup> Congress, which authorizes the formation of up to ten Interstate Passenger Rail Compacts/Commissions, modeled after the Southern Rail Commission, to carry the Secretary’s studies forward to implementation;
- d. Supporting congressionally authorized funding sufficient to restore and revitalize passenger rail service in the United States for rural long-distance routes through a combination of reinvestment in existing long-distance routes and expansion of the national rural long-distance network to include restoration of the Pioneer route.

Section 2. That this Resolution shall be in full force and effect immediately upon its adoption and approval.

PASSED AND APPROVED THIS \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2021.

\_\_\_\_\_  
President of the Council

\_\_\_\_\_  
Mayor

Attest:

\_\_\_\_\_  
City Clerk