



**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

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Mr. Roger Harris  
President  
Amtrak  
1 Massachusetts Ave., NW  
Washington, DC 20001

Dear Mr. Harris and Members of the Board:

I write today to inform you that Amtrak is the latest recipient of my Golden Fleece Award. I am giving Amtrak this award because, for more than 50 years, Amtrak has remained unprofitable and dependent on American taxpayers. That goes against the original intent for Amtrak as laid out by Congress.

When Congress passed the Rail Passenger Service Act in 1970 (Public Law 91-518), it directed Amtrak to be operated and managed as a for-profit corporation. In the 55 years since its creation, Amtrak has never posted an overall profit despite receiving more than \$100 billion in federal support since 1971 and an additional \$22 billion through the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (Public Law 117-58).<sup>1</sup> Although the Northeast Corridor generates the majority of ticket revenue, it has never been sufficient to offset the profit losses from longer Amtrak routes.

From the mid-1970s to today Amtrak has often projected profitability, but its original intended goal of becoming profitable has never been met. According to the most recent audited financial statements, Amtrak reported a net loss of about \$1.8 billion in fiscal year (FY) 2024.<sup>2</sup> Amtrak's long-distance network recorded an operating loss of \$635 million in FY2024 alone.<sup>3</sup> The current operating plans project that Amtrak will break even by 2028 assuming an adjusted operating basis. I and the American taxpayers look forward to learning if Amtrak can deliver on this promise.<sup>4</sup>

1. Congressional Research Service. *Amtrak: Overview*. Published September 28, 2017.

<https://www.crs.gov/Reports/R44973?source=search>.

2. Amtrak. *Audited Consolidated Financial Statements, FY2024*. Published December 12, 2024.

<https://www.amtrak.com/content/dam/projects/dotcom/english/public/documents/corporate/financial/Amtrak-Audited-Consolidated-Financial-Statements-FY2024.pdf>.

3. Amtrak. *Financial Performance FAQs*. Published March 5, 2025.

<https://www.amtrak.com/content/dam/projects/dotcom/english/public/documents/corporate/amtrak-financial-performance-faqs-03052025.pdf>.

4. Reuters. Shepardson, David. US railroad Amtrak cutting 450 positions, \$100 million in annual costs. Published May 7, 2025. <https://www.reuters.com/business/world-at-work/us-railroad-amtrak-cutting-450-positions-100-million-annual-costs-2025-05-07/>.

Unfortunately, Amtrak has turned into a striking example of long-term government waste. Instead of building a self-sustaining passenger rail system, Amtrak has consumed billions of taxpayer money and produced nothing but larger budget deficits. Amtrak has never once produced a real profit. This long record of broken promises, staggering losses, and permanent dependence on subsidies makes Amtrak one of the costliest disappointments in federal transportation policy.

I am encouraged by the current changes implemented by Secretary of Transportation Sean Duffy. Under Secretary Duffy's guidance and leadership, Amtrak has started to move in a better direction. Secretary Duffy has pushed Amtrak to scale back its scope, focus on core routes, and adopt a more disciplined approach to spending. I am pleased that Secretary Duffy has already taken steps to reduce overhead and cut wasteful practices, proving that Amtrak can operate with greater accountability. These reforms show that Amtrak can return to the vision of a leaner, more responsible passenger rail service that does not endlessly rely on taxpayer money. With continued leadership from Secretary Duffy, Amtrak can finally begin the process of breaking its fifty-year cycle of losses.

The Golden Fleece award is intended to highlight the urgent need for reform. Narrowing Amtrak's scope, ensuring routes are cost-effective, and holding leadership accountable are necessary steps if the company is ever to stop burdening American taxpayers. The American people were promised more than half a century ago that passenger rail would operate like a business and not remain a permanent burden on the taxpayers. Now it is time for you and your team to work alongside Secretary Duffy to move away from taxpayer reliance.

Should you need additional authority from Congress to help achieve this goal, I urge you to notify me. I would also welcome any technical assistance you can provide to help us correct statutory issues that may have contributed to this long-standing and costly failure.

Sincerely,



French Hill  
Member of Congress

CC: The Honorable Sean Duffy, Secretary of the U.S. Department of Transportation