

Freight Rail Industry Teams Up In Washington

During Railroad Day on the Hill meetings held in March, more than 350 freight rail industry professionals met virtually with 200+ congressional offices, sharing the story of the correlation between a healthy railroad industry and a healthy U.S. economy.

The annual gathering has been held for nearly 20 years and is the one time each year the freight rail industry, including Class I and short line railroads and railroad suppliers, customers and customers, meet with elected officials as a single entity.

“Railroad Day is a time-honored tradition that our industry looks forward to each year,” said Chuck Baker, president of the American Short Line and Regional Railroad Association.

Prior to the event, Baker said, “This year, we will thank Congress for the meaningful investment levels provided for in the IIJA/ BIL (Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act/Bipartisan Infrastructure Law). The entire industry stands ready to fully utilize the funding, preparing for a streamlined



Railroad Day on the Hill is the day the freight rail industry comes together with one voice to share the importance of the industry to the U.S. economy and discuss major legislative initiatives for the year.

implementation that expedites turning funding into active projects that drive innovation and safety.”

RTA Vice President Dave Koch, general manager of Wheeler Lumber Company, and Kevin D. Hicks, senior vice president and freight market sector leader for TranSystems, both attended the event and offered comments on the experience.

“I have been attending Railroad Day on the Hill for many years, both in person and virtually. It has always been an incredible experience to work side by side with our railroad customers and other industry members to voice a unified message to our

senators and congressmen,” Koch said.

“As a former railroader and a current supplier to the U.S. rail industry, the laws, regulations, and funding opportunities that are important to the railroads are also very important to me,” Hicks said. “Railroad Day on the Hill is a great opportunity for me to share the importance of those things with our elected officials in Washington. Many of them don’t understand the rail industry as much as we would like for them to, so these brief meetings are a great chance to educate them on the industry as a whole and also on current legislation that is important to the industry.” ■



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