

**A Resolution
of the
Helena Citizens' Council
to support passenger rail service through
Helena, MT**

A resolution of the Citizens' Council of Helena, Montana, in support of reestablishing passenger rail service through Helena connecting to other population centers of Montana.

Whereas, AMTRAK's Empire Builder is the number one long distance passenger train in the United States, and is greatly needed for the citizens of Montana's Hi-Line who do not have a great choice of public transportation in a large rural state like Montana; and

Whereas, AMTRAK discontinued service along its southern Hiawatha route in 1979, leaving only the Empire Builder to provide passenger rail service to Montana for the past 37 years; and

Whereas, Montanans living along the abandoned Hiawatha route must, as a consequence, drive for three to five hours to get to the nearest train station; and

Whereas, transportation to and from the major population centers of southern Montana would be greatly enhanced by passenger rail service; and

Whereas, improved passenger rail service connecting the major population centers of southern Montana to each other and perhaps beyond would constitute a boon to tourism and the economy of the region; and

Whereas, we are facing a critical problem with global warming and we need to greatly reduce our emissions of greenhouse gases into the atmosphere; and

Whereas, Montana's southern Hiawatha rail route now by-passes Butte to include Helena;

Now, therefore, be it resolved, the Helena Citizens' Council hereby recommends to the Helena City Commission that they support any effort -- be it AMTRAK, government sponsored, or private -- to reestablish passenger rail service along the present BNSF/Montana Rail Link route connecting Helena with its sister cities across southern Montana. The Helena Citizens' Council further recommends a cooperative relationship with the freight railroads and passenger operations.

Passed and adopted this 28th day of the month of September, in the year of 2016 by a majority vote of the Helena Citizens' Council.



Gary Spaeth, Chair
Helena Citizens Council