



Support: Reauthorization and strengthening of FTA’s Rail Vehicle Replacement Program (49 U.S.C. §5337(f))

ISSUE & BACKGROUND: The Federal Transit Administration’s Rail Vehicle Replacement Program (49 U.S.C. §5337(f)) provides competitive capital grants to replace passenger rolling stock that have reached the end of their useful service life. Created under the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (Pub. Law 117-58), the program has funded large vehicle replacement awards supporting the production of over 770 American-built passenger vehicles to transit agencies nationwide. A significant share of the U.S. commuter and transit rail rolling stock fleet has exceeded or is nearing FTA’s useful-life guidance, creating a growing need for replacement. While replacing vehicles requires a significant upfront investment, keeping older vehicles in service often proves more costly in the long run due to higher maintenance expenses and increased breakdowns and equipment related delays.

Across each vehicle-type, passenger rail vehicles are increasing exceeding their useful service life:

Vehicle Type	Average Age	20+ Years Old	25+ Years Old	30+ Years Old
Commuter Rail Car	24.1 yrs	61.4% (3,706)	36.6% (2,213)	26.9% (1,624)
Commuter Rail Locomotive	25.6 yrs	61.5% (417)	41.0% (278)	26.7% (181)
Heavy Rail High-capacity fixed guideway vehicles	19.8 yrs	33.1% (4,496)	28.6% (3,892)	26.4% (3,592)
Light Rail Medium-capacity often at-grade vehicles	17.2 yrs	45.1% (815)	36.1% (652)	29.8% (538)

Source: APTA 2025 Public Transportation Vehicle Database

Federal investments made towards modernizing America’s transit equipment support thousands of U.S. jobs throughout the supply chain and generate localized economic benefits in communities not traditionally served by rail. Predictable funding also ensures suppliers have the long-term certainty needed to reinvest in facility modernization and in workforce development programs.

REQUEST: RSI recommends Congress strengthen and extend funding for the Rail Vehicle Replacement Program to ensure long-term investment in safe and modern transit systems.

- RSI supports reauthorizing the Rail Vehicle Replacement Program beyond FY2026 with at least \$300 million annually.
- RSI recommends Congress explore increasing funding levels while maintaining a competitive selection process, prioritizing transit fleets with equipment exceeding their useful service life.
- Should Congress increase annual funding, RSI recommends raising the statutory cap of 3 awards per fiscal year to allow more transit agencies to benefit from the program.

ABOUT RSI: RSI represents the full supply chain for the railroad system. Our membership comprises locomotive, freight, and passenger railcar manufacturers; railcar owners and lessors; mechanical systems and components suppliers; railway measurement and maintenance systems; and communications and signaling suppliers. The domestic railway supply industry has been a dynamic and vital part of the U.S. economy for nearly 200 years, encompassing more than 682,000 direct, indirect, and induced jobs across all 50 states.