
TESTIMONY OF

JOSEPH BOARDMAN
PRESIDENT AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
AMTRAK

BEFORE THE

SUBCOMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION, HOUSING AND URBAN
DEVELOPMENT

OF THE

COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 1, 2009
2:00 P.M.

2358 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING

The Amtrak system

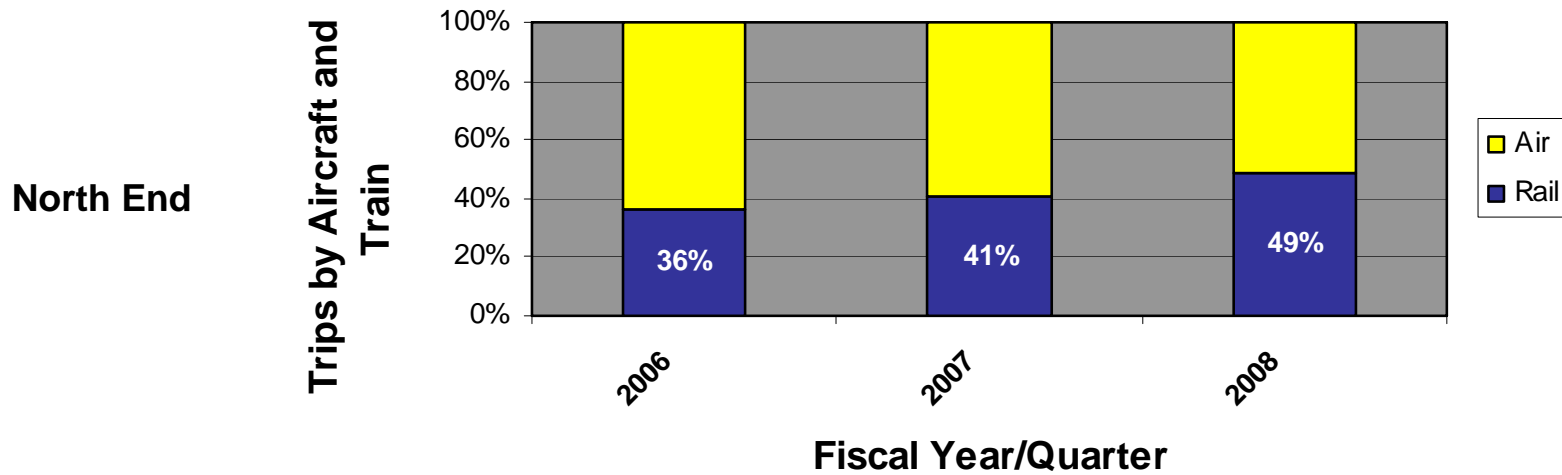
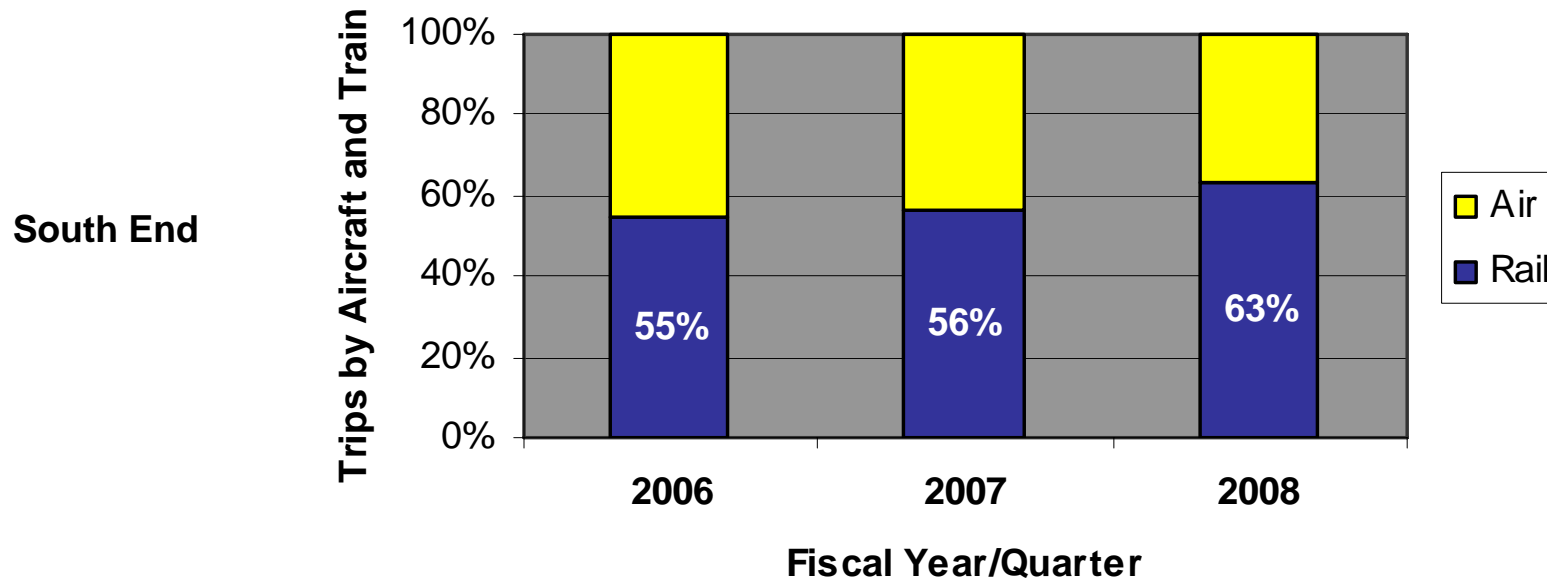
- We are America's intercity passenger rail provider
 - Operate in 46 states
 - 310 daily trains
 - Served 515 stations in 2008
- National network provided by sixteen long distance services and twenty-six short distance services
 - Most Long Distance trains are daily
 - Short Distance services offer variable frequencies – up to 32 per day
 - Amtrak is working with states to develop short distance networks and hubs in California, Illinois, and the Pacific Northwest
- The Northeast Corridor is the centerpiece of our system
 - About half of Amtrak's daily trains
 - The vast majority of its infrastructure
 - It's a legacy system – but a great one

This is an important moment

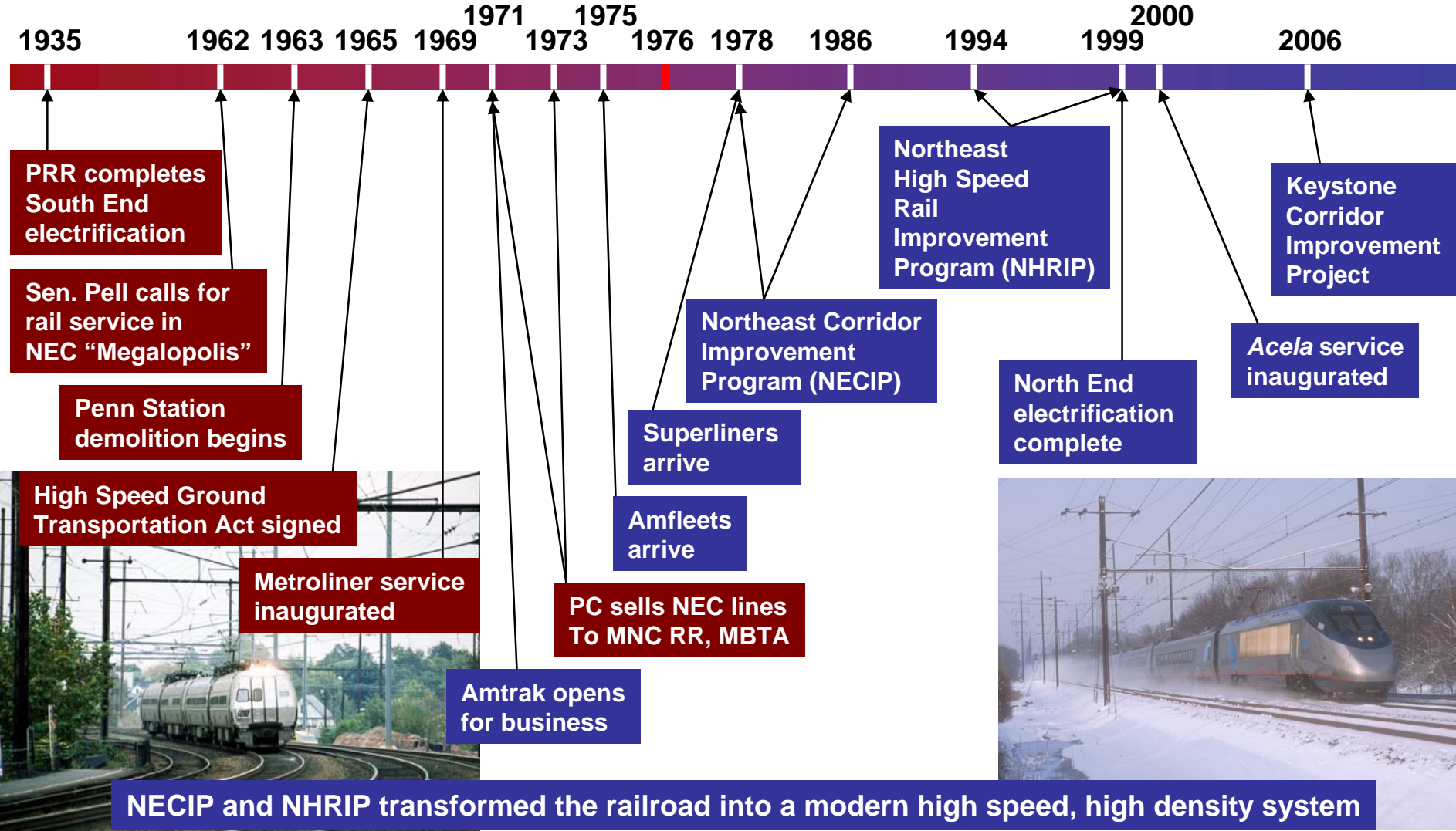
- Congress passed the Passenger Rail Investment and Improvement Act (PRIIA) in 2008
 - Acknowledges the role Amtrak and passenger rail have in the national transportation scheme
 - Provides a vision – and a tremendous opportunity
- Our job is twofold
 - Improving and sustaining our current services
 - Addressing future demand
- Getting to the system of the future
 - Must be safer – improve operations, update our plant, equipment, and signaling
 - Must be healthier – financially, and for the nation and the environment
 - Must be greener – reduce emissions, reduce demand for imported oil

Let's take a look at the system we have now – its performance, and its needs

Northeast Corridor Air/Rail Shares



Amtrak inherited the NEC in 1976.....



NECIP and NHRIP transformed the railroad into a modern high speed, high density system

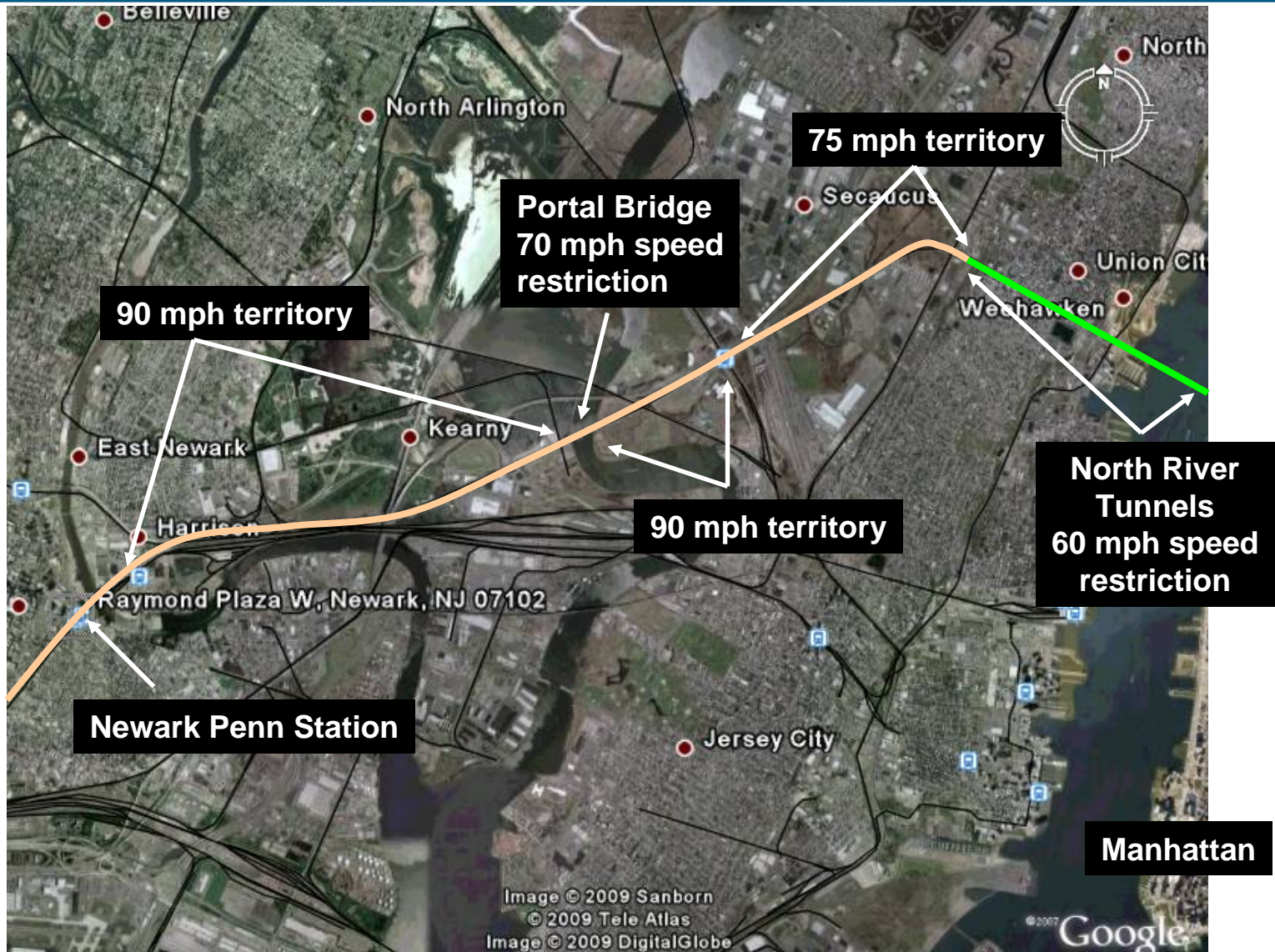


....and worked hard at improving it

	Pre-1976	Today
Signaling and control	About a fifth of the NEC bidirectional territory; rest unidirectional territory	Mostly bidirectional territory, Automatic Train Stop universal, ACSES in service
Interlockings	104 of 124 mechanically operated	No mechanical interlockings remain
Grade crossings	49 grade crossings	11 grade crossings (6 smart crossings)
Electrified segments	DC to New Haven	Whole Corridor
Maximum speed	About 110 mph*	150 mph
Total daily passenger trains (All carriers)	1,199	1,999

These are significant achievements – but they don't liberate us from our existing infrastructure

Portal bridge – a bottleneck at the entrance to New York



Line narrows from four running tracks to two at Newark Penn - and speeds are restricted

Getting to 2:30 on the South End with five stops

Program	Cost (\$ M)	Includes
135-150 mph track upgrades	240	ACSES wayside; other track, signal and capacity improvements
Equipment modifications	40	Door mods and new trucks to allow 130 mph service on <i>Acela</i> with 9" of cant
ACSES onboard equipment (Positive Train Control)	75	Freight, SEPTA, and a portion of the MARC fleet
Constant Tension Catenary	270	Can be dispensed with in the short term, if catenary can be brought to SOGR; over long term, must be replaced.

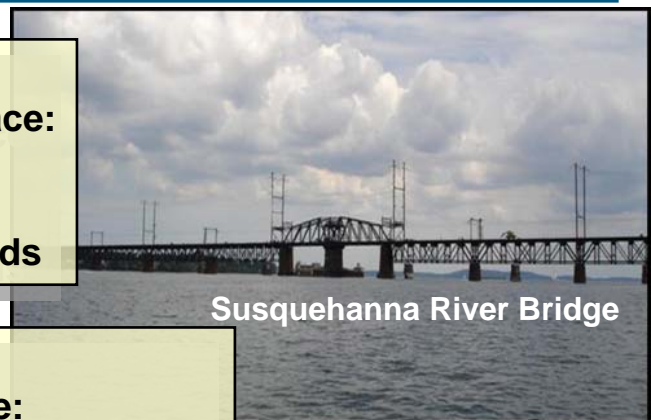
Total 625

But a lot remains to be done, and the cost is substantial



Built in 1907
Cost to replace:
\$225 million
Most active – 4K openings/yr
Fatigue issues

Connecticut River Bridge



Built in 1906
Cost to replace:
\$550 million
SOGR and capacity needs

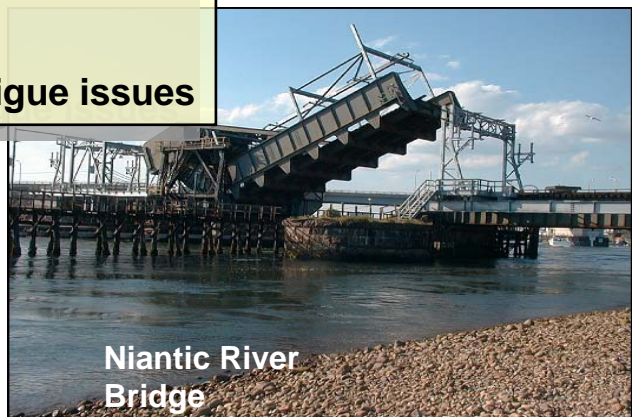
Susquehanna River Bridge



Built in 1906
Cost to replace:
\$1.5 billion
Major bottleneck
420 trains/day

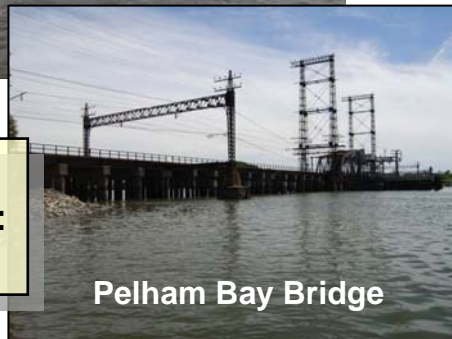
Portal Bridge

Built in 1907
Cost to replace:
\$100 million
2nd most active
Reliability & fatigue issues



Niantic River Bridge

Built in 1907
Cost to replace:
\$210 million



Pelham Bay Bridge

Built in 1873
Cost to replace:
\$1.2 billion
Major bottleneck
30 mph speed restriction
Water infiltration problems



B&P Tunnel



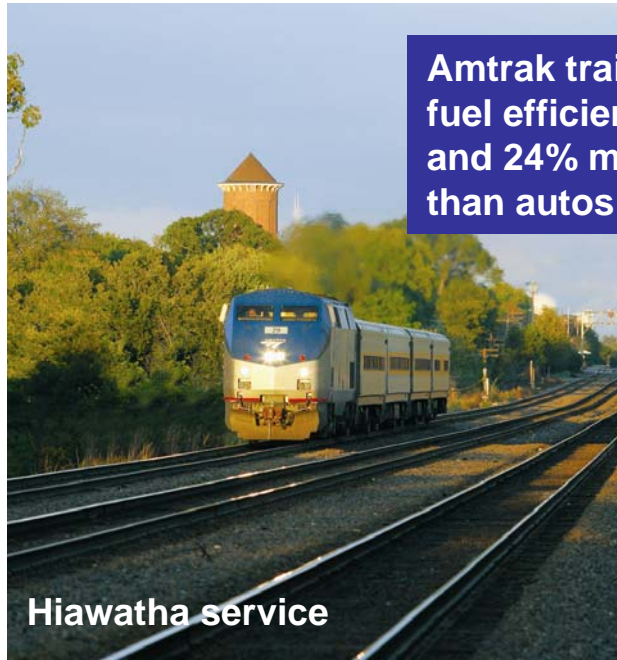
All of these structures predate the Model T (1908)

Investment in SOGR brings immediate benefits



- Cooperative project to rehabilitate 104 miles of the “Main Line” between Philadelphia and Harrisburg
- Cost of \$145M shared by Amtrak and the state of Pennsylvania
 - Upgraded catenary and right-of-way to permit 110 mph service
 - Reconfigured interlockings
- Allowed us to speed up service
 - Cut up to 15 minutes off Harrisburg-Philly trip
 - Cut up to 30 minutes off Harrisburg-NY trip
 - Replaced 9 diesel-powered round trips with 12 electrified round trips
- Ridership grew by about 20% in FY 07 and 19.8% in FY 08

And allows us to maintain a greener operation



Amtrak trains are 18% more fuel efficient than airplanes and 24% more fuel efficient than autos

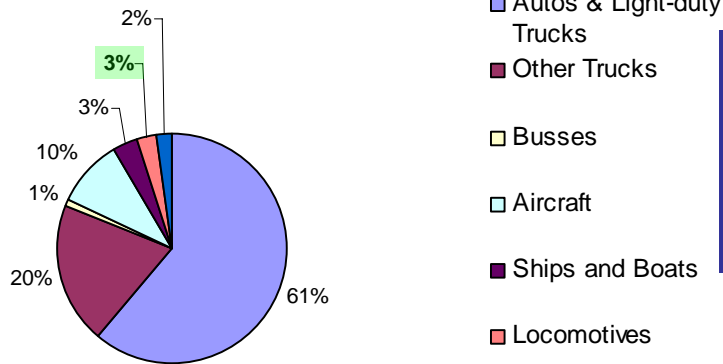
Hiawatha service



San Joaquin

A typical Amtrak train has the capacity of five or six regional jets

Transportation-related CO₂ Emissions



Rail emits a very small portion of the transportation industry's CO₂ output

Source: EPA *Inventory of U.S. Greenhouse Gasses and Sinks, 1990-2005*



Southwest Chief

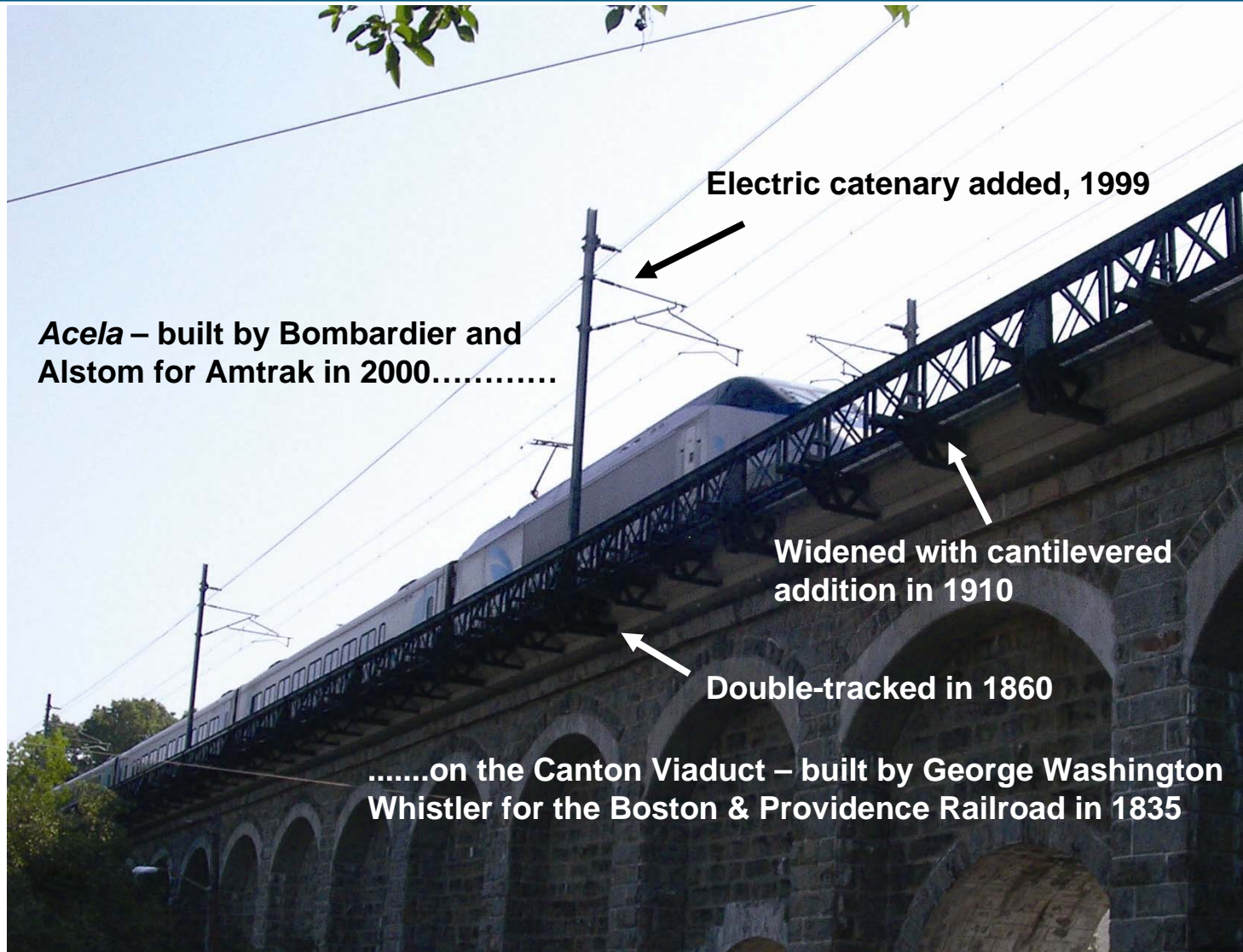
High Speed Rail in Europe



Purpose-built infrastructure and equipment

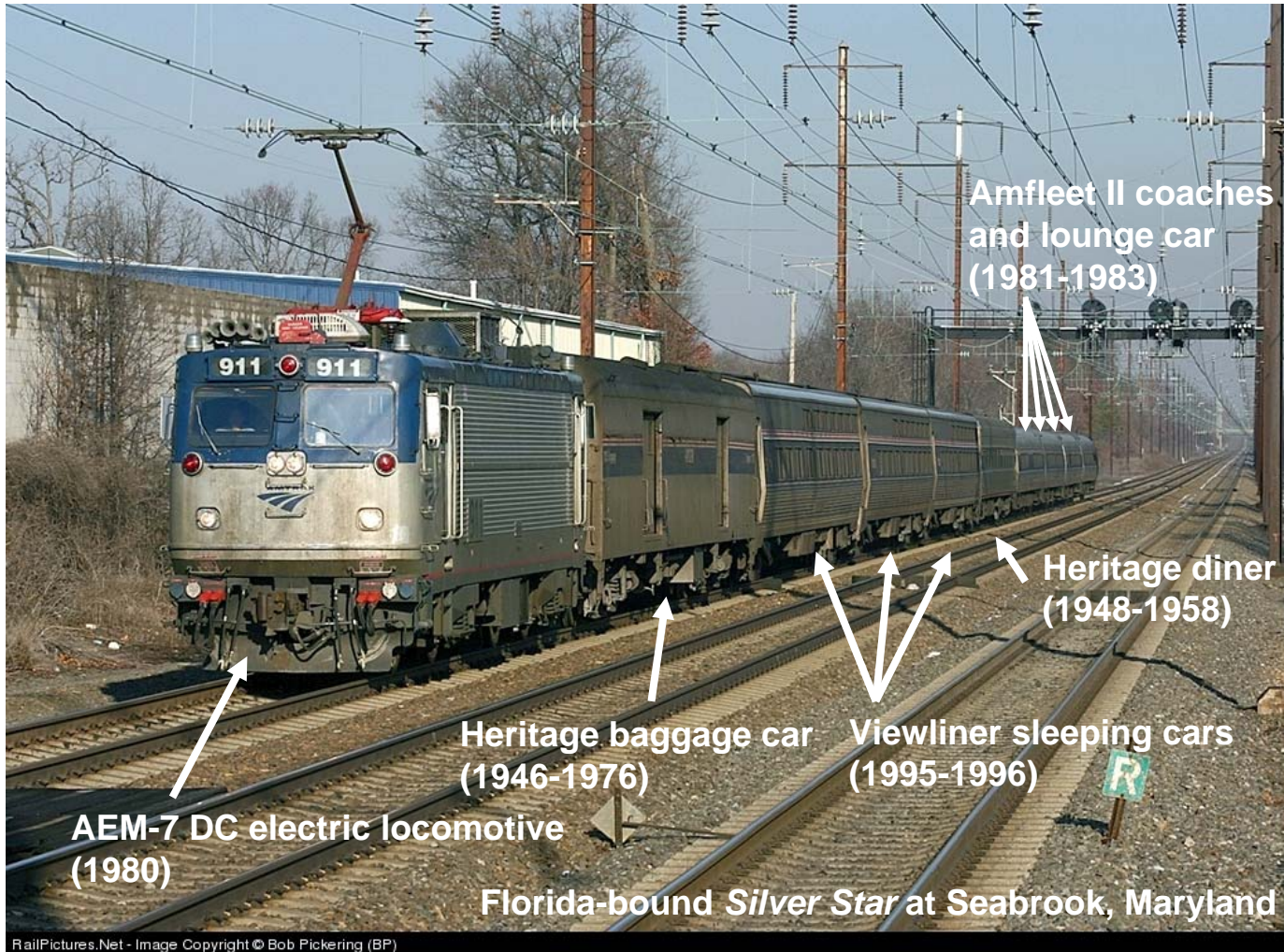


We're good at adaptive reuse.....



But *still* a 125 mph speed bump in a 150 mph railroad

.....but aging is an irreversible process

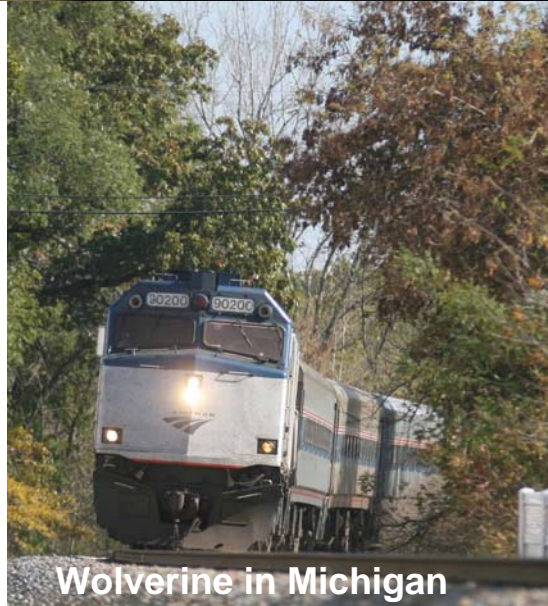


We must replace the Heritage fleet, and augment the electric locomotive and sleeper fleets

Low hanging fruit



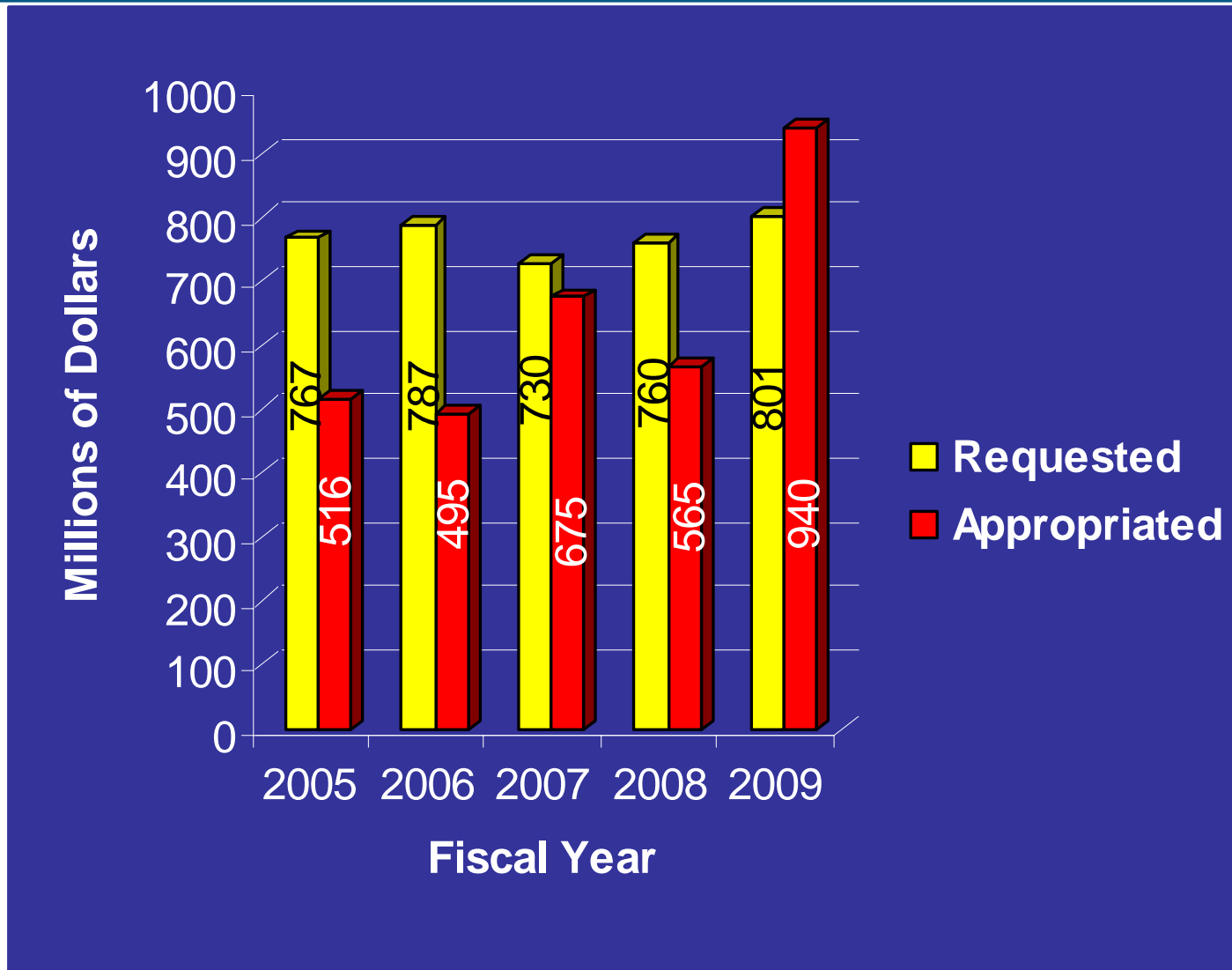
Main Street Station, Richmond, VA



Wolverine in Michigan

- Several corridors have strong development potential
- Virginia (DC-Richmond)
 - Natural feeder to NEC
 - Electrified connection could potentially accelerate existing services to 110 mph
- Michigan (Chicago-Detroit)
 - PTC system in place – some 95 mph service
 - Strong state interest (MI) and potential freight partner (NS)
 - Chicago hub provides range of travel choices

Amtrak's annual capital needs



Amtrak needs about \$700 million per year just to keep its SOGR problem from getting worse

Amtrak's stimulus request

- Stimulus allocated a considerable sum to Amtrak for capital and other projects
 - \$850 million
 - Additional \$450 million for security
- This represents about a year and a half of capital funding
- All of our investments will support the goals of the bill:
 - Infrastructure
 - Equipment
 - Mandatory compliance needs
 - ADA
 - PTC

Stimulus Goals
To preserve and create jobs and stimulate the economy
Preference to projects that support development of intercity high speed rail service
Preference to projects for the repair, rehabilitation, upgrade, or purchase of railroad assets or infrastructure that can be awarded within 180 days of enactment of this Act. To invest in transportation, environmental protection, and other infrastructure that will provide long-term economic benefits.
Preference to activities that can be started and completed expeditiously

Attract ridership on successful routes

Build the quality service that will make demand less elastic

Improve the company – financially, operationally, ethically

Transition to an enduring, affordable, and clean form of power

SAFER

GREENER

HEALTHIER

- Install PTC on Amtrak-owned lines by 2012 – other technology where warranted
- Implement Risk Reduction Behavior
- Complete ADA compliance by 2015

- Electrify to Richmond
- Seek to capture market share from airlines and autos
- Reduce oil dependence
- Implement recycling programs
- Ensure new facilities/cars/locos are environmentally friendly

- Improve our financial health
- Implement mandated metrics and standards
- Fix on-time performance
- Live our values
- Manage our mission