

## **Why are trains late?**

Some people like to blame the freight railroads.

Some people like to blame railroad dispatchers.

But in truth, the **primary** reason (there are many) trains are late is **US policy**.

Rail is the **ONLY** mode of transportation in the North America that relies primarily on private investment to: **acquire, develop, maintain, police, and signalize** nearly all of their right-of-way.

**AND** the railroad companies are required to **pay taxes** on their rights-of-way, and on the improvements to their rights-of-way.

Consequently, whenever there is a downturn in the economy, railroad companies **must** downsize infrastructure in order to avoid huge losses or bankruptcy.

What about **aviation, highways and waterways**? They rely in part or in whole on taxpayer dollars to acquire, develop, maintain, police, and signalize nearly all of their right-of-way.

**AND** their rights-of-way and the improvements thereon are **tax-free**.

**AND**, when there is a **downturn in the economy**, one of the most common responses is--- let's stimulate the economy by "investing" public dollars building new roads and airports and improving our ports. Of course, taxes paid by railway companies help us to "invest" in the economy in this manner (railroad companies help to subsidize their competition). This has been true for many, many decades. This is one of many reasons our transportation system has evolved as it has.

So, the next time your train is late because we rely primarily on single track lines congested with freight traffic, don't blame Amtrak, or the dispatchers, or the freight railroad companies. Instead, **work to change US policy** so that we no longer discriminate against railway transportation. **There should be a tax incentive, rather than a penalty, for railroads to increase capacity to meet future needs.**

One way **you** can help change US policy is by joining and working with **AORTA** (Association of Oregon Rail and Transit Advocates), working since 1976 to improve our state and our nation's transportation system. Use the link below. If you have any questions, or want to challenge any of the point raised above, please respond! We will not have a rail history to celebrate if we do not take care of our rail future!!

Dan McFarling