

**Western Association of State Highway
and Transportation Officials**

Resolution 5-04

Federal Support for Branch Line Railroads

Whereas, the rail branch lines are an important component of the western state's and the nation's transportation networks; and

Whereas, the Rail Rehabilitation and Improvement Financing (RRIF) Program was authorized in 1998 to make up to \$3.5 billion in loans and loan guarantees to:

- Acquire, improve, or rehabilitate intermodal or rail equipment or facilities,
- Refinance outstanding debt for the purpose listed above, and
- Develop or establish new intermodal or railroad facilities; and

Whereas, by early 2004 only about \$350 million of this funding has been utilized, and

Whereas, many potential users of the RRIF program feel it has not been user-friendly and conducive to moving resources into needed projects.

Now, therefore be it resolved, that the WASHTO states urge the FRA to simplify administration of the RRIF program so its authorized funds can be fully utilized; and

Be it further resolved, WASHTO supports continued Federal support for short line railroads through either RRIF or a successor program from a funding source other than the Highway Trust Fund; and

Be it further resolved, WASHTO supports the appropriation of funds for the purpose of the RRIF or a successor program.

Approved March 30, 2004
WASHTO Board of Directors

Attest

Secretary-Treasurer