



Welcome to the new RAIL Solution railroad industry update. In this periodic communication we attempt to keep you informed of key developments and place our Steel Interstate advocacy in context. The **Newsletter** is also attached as a PDF to facilitate downloading and reviewing on a wider variety of electronic devices.

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**BILLBOARD EXPERIMENT ENDS**

Every organization wrestles with the challenge of getting its message out and building public support. This year RAIL Solution' decided to try a new approach by renting for nine months a billboard on Interstate 81. Its message was created to build on the frustration of passing motorists dealing with heavy truck traffic.

The billboard faced northbound I-81 traffic on the right-hand side of the road immediately north of the US 23 exit at Kingsport, TN. It was hard to miss, even when coming up the entrance ramp from US 23.



To evaluate the effectiveness of this test, RAIL Solution created a wholly new website, [www.TrucksOnTrains.org](http://www.TrucksOnTrains.org) to assess exactly feedback from the billboard's message. The results were quite interesting. First, it did, in fact, create a significant spike in visits to our main website promoting the Steel Interstate, <http://steelinterstate.org/concept>. Second, based on visit duration, we found that those website visitors were rather serious about their review of our material. Third, however, this activity did not translate into a meaningful uptick in new memberships to our organization. Fourth, and perhaps not surprisingly, it also triggered vociferous responses from truckers, who objected to our thought-provoking message, even though the Steel Interstate concept is not anti-truck. At the end of the test period, we concluded that the billboard campaign was widely noticed. But our hope to attract more interest and support among the traveling public for diverting heavy truck flows to rail did not pan out.

#### FEEDBACK FROM ISSUE NO. 1

The biggest response was that the issue was too long ("5 pages is too much!" "Limit the newsletter to one article"). We hear you. We will.

One that surprised us was "You didn't ask for money, or say how to donate." That wasn't very smart. Both [www.railsolution.org](http://www.railsolution.org) and [www.steelinterstate.org](http://www.steelinterstate.org) have a JOIN and a DONATE tab. Contributions can be made there using PayPal. RAIL Solution is a 501(c)(3) organization and welcomes your support and participation.

FINANCING AMERICAN INFRASTRUCTURE WITH  
REPATRIATED CORPORATE PROFITS  
By David Foster

We are highly dependent on good infrastructure for the mobility of both goods and people that is so vital to our quality of life.

Infrastructure represents heavy capital investments in the nation's future. It's there for decades, even centuries, to come. Building good infrastructure provides jobs and economic growth. Availability of good infrastructure promotes efficiency and economic competitiveness.

Where we usually have problems is how to fund infrastructure programs. At RAIL Solution we have devoted a lot of attention to this because our Steel Interstate concept is a capital-intensive infrastructure initiative.

We propose a unique plan to devote to this task some of the trillions of dollars in profits of U.S. multinational companies escrowed overseas. Typically as long as these profits are not brought into the U.S., they remain sheltered from U.S. taxation. No one in the United States benefits from this today. And no one in the United States would be harmed in any way if this enormous resource were tapped to fund the nation's much needed infrastructure growth and development.

From time to time we hear proposals to implement a tax on these foreign profits, but the likelihood of passing a new tax is low. Here's how to embrace this great concept but avoid the contentious issue of a new tax. Permit U.S. multinationals to repatriate their escrowed foreign profits tax-free as long as they are spent on an approved list of major infrastructure projects in the United States.

The companies repatriating the funds would scour the country looking for the most promising new infrastructure investments, redeploying these funds far more speedily and efficiently than any tax-funded political process ever could.

Of course the enabling legislation would have to specify infrastructure projects with a public purpose and benefit, such as railroads, urban mass transit, roads and bridges, ports, electrical grids, power generation, and so on.

The public would benefit from sustainable new investments in infrastructure, workers would benefit from job growth, the economy would enjoy an immediate stimulus, and government tax revenues would ultimately rise commensurate with increased economic growth.

Over the years we have read, and written, a number of proposed ideas for funding the Steel Interstate, but this is one we feel has genuine potential to provide the public/private funding, corridor by corridor, to build much-needed new railroad capacity in the U.S.

## STEEL INTERSTATE AREMA SEMINAR AUGUST 27

Here is the link for the seminar agenda and registration details:

[www.arema.org/files/seminars/Building\\_the\\_Steel\\_Interstate\\_August\\_2016.pdf](http://www.arema.org/files/seminars/Building_the_Steel_Interstate_August_2016.pdf)

Once again this year RAIL Solution executive director David Foster is the leadoff speaker at the Orlando seminar.

**Coming in the September issue: the challenge “Platooning” Driverless Trucks on dedicated truck lanes creates for America’s railroads.**



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