

PRESS RELEASE

United States of America: **President Biden is pushing for more competition –** **but this must include long distance passenger rail**

WASHINGTON DC & BRUSSELS, September 23, 2021: last week, it was reported that a newly formed White House Council will promote competition across the US economy¹, in order to “*drive down prices for consumers*”, encouraging companies to “*up their game*” and become more innovative.

This is exactly what happened in EU long distance passenger rail over the past decade – in those countries where competition has been allowed so far. Therefore: we urge US Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg & the Surface Transportation Board to ensure that competition in long distance passenger rail is included in the plans. This will help reduce carbon emissions too(!)

A good example is high speed rail in Italy, where privately owned new entrant operator Italo² started competing against state-owned incumbent operator FS Trenitalia in 2012. This intramodal competition has produced many benefits:

- Average fares fell by 40%³. They are now so affordable that small businesses, the self-employed & others can afford to make several trips a week.
- Italian high-speed rail ridership has **more than doubled**, to the detriment of air & car usage but to the benefit of both new entrant & state incumbent.
- It's a Win-Win situation. Professor Andrea Giuricin emphasises: “*No politician in Italy would consider going back to the situation before Italo*”³.

ALLRAIL Secretary General Nick Brooks says: “*in many parts of the US, skies are full & freeways are congested with cars. The Biden administration must create the conditions for more competition in long distance rail – not just one operator. It's a 'no brainer' – more rail passengers will also lead to reduced carbon emissions*”.

Tomorrow, Italo representative Federico Meda will be presenting at a free online lunch event hosted by the US High Speed Rail Alliance. In order to participate, please register here: hsrail.org/brown-bag-lunch-italo-high-speed-trains .

¹ <https://newsnationusa.com/news/usanews/newly-formed-white-house-council-to-promote-competition-across-us-economy-to-hold-first-meeting>

² <https://www.italotreno.it/en>

³ https://www.railjournal.com/in_depth/italian-high-speed-success#.XMqlq2dFwDA.twitter