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High Speed Rail Affirmative Blocks

1aC - High Speed Rail Network – Plan Text

The United States federal government should substantially increase its investment in a national high-speed rail network.

1aC - High Speed Rail Network

Contention One is Inherency

Congressional budget battles killed Obama’s vision for high-speed rail funding; New visions and investment required to wake up the zombified plans for innovative high speed rail network

Meggison, syndicated columnist – Clean Technica, December 11, 2011 [Andrew, American High Speed Rail is Not Dead – It’s More of a Zombie,” http://cleantechnica.com/2011/12/07/high-speed-rail-hacked-attacked-in-u-s-but-not-yet-fully-dead/, Accessed 6/1/12] SM

Before the Thanksgiving break, House Republicans voted to kill a transportation appropriations bill that resulted in the majority of funding for America’s high speed rail program being eliminated. The GOP cheered at the death of President Obama’s national rail network plan; but their jubilation came premature. When the vote went to the Senate things changed – the bill was not dead but not really alive either.Prior to the House vote, the Obama Administration had envisioned spending $53 billion on a nationwide high speed rail program over a six year period, including more than $8 billion next year. Beginning in 2008, under the Passenger Rail Investment Act, or PRIA, Congress spent about $2 billion a year on the American high speed rail program. But last year, Congress stopped appropriating money for high speed rail; essentially derailing President Obama’s expressed intention to connect 80% of Americans to high speed rail by 2036. Even with all these setbacks against an American high speed rail program, President Barack Obama inserted $4 billion for high speed rail into his American Jobs Act.It is no secret that [America’s rail program](http://gas2.org/2011/10/13/the-next-chapter-of-american-high-speed-rail/), that was [once great](http://gas2.org/2011/06/03/american-high-speed-rail-past-and-present/), is now in shambles. Other [developed](http://gas2.org/2011/10/17/the-future-of-the-german-train-system-%E2%80%93-100-reliance-on-renewable-fuels/) and developing countries, such as [China](http://gas2.org/2011/07/28/chinese-bullet-trains-collide-leaving-39-dead-and-many-unanswered-questions/), have long surpassed the American rail program by building high speed services that connect cities and people across their nations.The hope was that the construction of a national high speed rail network would, in the U.S., provide Americans with an alternative means of transportation, provide jobs, and act as a spark in rebuilding America’s crumbling infrastructure. Ultimately, the national rail plan was seen by many as a monetary expenditure that the U.S. cannot afford and that was bogged down in some states, most notably [California](http://gas2.org/2011/09/26/obama-high-speed-rail-and-the-state-of-california/), by too much red tape.Rather than allow the Obama bill to pass, some legislators felt that the bill should be killed. Not as a means to end high speed rail in America for good, oh no, the action of killing the Obama bill would be used to restart the plan on a blank slate. [Rep. Bill Shuster](http://shuster.house.gov/) (R-Pa.) said,“Today’s vote marks the end to President Obama’s misguided high speed rail program, but it also represents a new beginning for true intercity high-speed passenger rail service in America. By zeroing out high-speed intercity passenger rail funding, we are being given the unique opportunity to refocus and reform the high-speed rail program on the rail lines that will produce the most benefit for the least amount of cost.”Shuster continued“The Obama Administration bungled its high-speed rail program from the start, losing an important opportunity to build true high-speed rail in areas where it makes sense, like the Northeast Corridor,” he said. “Instead, billions of dollars were spread too thin around the country and spent on incremental improvements to existing Amtrak services that weren’t high-speed at all.”Across the aisle, Democrats in the House conceded that the Obama plan was far from perfect but was the best that could be worked out given the poor American economy.For their part, Democrats in the House said the bill Thursday was “far from perfect,” but they were resigned to the fate of the rail money for now. [Rep. Jerrold Nadler](http://nadler.house.gov/) (D-N.Y.) said,“For too long, we have been over-dependent on cars and planes. High Speed Rail should be an option between any cities within a 500 mile radius, providing competitive trip times and fares, freeing up airspace, and benefiting our environment, economy, and national security. It makes no sense to abandon our efforts to develop High Speed Rail in this country.”With the Obama bill killed in the House the bill went to the Senate, where it received a bit of life after death. The Senate committee voted to restore $100 million in spending to the high speed rail program. Some spending at least keeps the program alive – sort of.With a zombified high speed rail funding bill lurking around some progress will still be done on establishing a nationwide high speed rail line; but with the limited funds not much progress can be made. Meanwhile, instead of looking at a nationwide system all attention is now focused on the existing rails in the Northeast and improvements that can be made to them using high speed train technology.The successful amendment to restore $100 million in funding was sponsored by Senators [Richard Durbin](http://durbin.senate.gov/public/) (D-IL), [Frank Lautenberg](http://lautenberg.senate.gov/) (D-NJ), [Mary Landrieu](http://landrieu.senate.gov/) (D-LA), and [Dianne Feinstein](http://www.feinstein.senate.gov/public/) (D-CA).

1aC High Speed Rail– Oil Dependence Advantage

Advantage ­\_\_ is Oil Dependence

Oil still accounts for almost half of total US energy needs, including 94% of energy used in transportation

Nerurkar, specialist in energy policy, Council on Foreign Relations, April 4, 2012 [Neelesh, “CRS: US Oil Imports and Exports,” http://www.cfr.org/us-strategy-and-politics/crs-us-oil-imports-exports/p27891, ] SM

Oil is a critical resource for the U.S. economy. It meets nearly 40% of total U.S. energy needs, including 94% of the energy used in transportation and 40% of the energy used by the industrial sector.1 Unlike other forms of energy such as coal and natural gas, which are largely supplied from domestic sources, net imports from foreign sources meet 45% of U.S. oil consumption, and thus the basis of many of the nation's energy security concerns.The United States has been concerned about dependence on foreign oil since it became a net oil importer in the late 1940s. Those concerns grew with import levels, especially in periods of high or rising oil prices. Nonetheless, imports have generally increased over the last six decades, except for a period following the oil spikes of the 1970s and again in the last six years. Net oil import volumes and share of consumption peaked in 2005 and then declined through 2011 as a result of economic and policy-driven changes in domestic supply and demand. However, oil total (or aggregate) import costs have increased due to rising prices, which more than offset the savings from lower import volumes.Net imports are gross imports minus exports (it is also the difference between domestic demand and supply). Interest in oil imports has climbed again as oil prices rebounded in response to global economic recovery in 2009-2010 and unrest in the Middle East and North Africa in 2011 (Libya, Egypt) and 2012 (tensions with Iran). Attention to oil exports grew in 2011, when the United States became a net exporter of petroleum products at a time when petroleum product prices were rising. Though it remains a large net importer of oil due to the need for crude oil from abroad, the United States recently started exporting more petroleum products than it imports.

Oil dependence makes US resource hegemony completely unsustainable – putting America on an inevitable collision course with other countries, ensuring great power wars

Heinberg, Professor New College, recipient of M.K. Hubbert Award for Energy Excellence Education & Senior Fellow at Post-Carbon Institute, 2003 [Richard, The Party’s Over: Oil, War, and the Fate of Industrial Societies, 2003, p. 230]

Today the average US citizen uses five times as much energy as the world average. Even citizens of nations that export oil – such as Venezuela and Iran – use only a small fraction of the energy US citizens use per capita. The Carter Doctrine, declared in 1980, made it plain that US military might would be applied to the project of dominating the world’s oil wealth: henceforth, any hostile effort to impede the flow of Persian Gulf oil would be regarded as an “assault on the vital interests of the United States” and would be “repelled by any means necessary, including military force.” In the past 60 years, the US military and intelligence services have grown to become bureaucracies of unrivaled scope, power, and durability. While the US has not declared war on any nation since 1945, it has nevertheless bombed or invaded a total of 19 countries and stationed troops, or engaged in direct or indirect military action, in dozens of others. During the Cold War, the US military apparatus grew exponentially, ostensibly in response to the threat posed by an archrival: the Soviet Union. But after the end of the Cold War the American military and intelligence establishments did not shrink in scale to any appreciable degree. Rather, their implicit agenda — the protection of global resource interests emerged as the semi-explicit justification for their continued existence. With resource hegemony came challenges from nations or sub-national groups opposing that hegemony. But the immensity of US military might ensured that such challenges would be overwhelmingly asymmetrical. US strategists labeled such challenges “terrorism” — a term with a definition malleable enough to be applicable to any threat from any potential enemy, foreign or domestic, while never referring to any violent action on the part of the US, its agents, or its allies. **This policy puts the US on a collision course with the rest of the world**. **If all-out competition is pursued with the available weapons of awesome power, the result could be the destruction** not just of industrial civilization, but **of humanity and most of the biosphere**.

1aC High Speed Rail– Oil Dependence Advantage

US oil dependence directly contributes to the current energy driven crisis with Iran, makes conflict inevitbale

Klare, professor of peace and world security studies at Hampshire College, May 10, 2012 [Michael, “Tomgram: Michael Klare, Oil Wars on the Horizon,”

http://www.tomdispatch.com/blog/175540/tomgram%3A\_michael\_klare%2C\_oil\_wars\_on\_the\_horizon, Accessed 6/1/12] SM

**U.S. forces mobilize for war with Iran:** Throughout the winter and early spring, it appeared that an armed clash of some sort pitting Iran against Israel and/or the United States was almost inevitable.  Neither side seemed prepared to back down on key demands, especially on Iran’s nuclear program, and any talk of a compromise solution was deemed unrealistic.  Today, however, the risk of war has [diminished somewhat](http://www.bostonglobe.com/news/world/2012/04/29/analysts-say-chances-war-with-iran-have-diminished/QMJ4z14CRteYAAehfsrhpN/story.html) -- at least through this election year in the U.S. -- as talks have finally gotten under way between the major powers and Iran, and as both have adopted (slightly) more accommodating stances.  In addition, U.S. officials have been tamping down war talk and figures in the Israeli military and intelligence communities have [spoken out](http://www.lobelog.com/former-idf-intelligence-head-attacking-iran-may-accelerate-nuclear-program/) against rash military actions.  However, the Iranians continue to enrich uranium, and leaders on all sides say they are fully prepared to employ force if the peace talks fail.For the Iranians, this means [blocking](http://www.tomdispatch.com/blog/175496/tomgram%3A_michael_klare,_no_exit_in_the_persian_gulf/) the Strait of Hormuz, the narrow channel through which one-third of the world’s tradable oil passes every day.  The U.S., for its part, has insisted that it will keep the Strait open and, if necessary, eliminate Iranian nuclear capabilities.  Whether to intimidate Iran, prepare for the real thing, or possibly both, the U.S. has been building up its military capabilities in the Persian Gulf area, deploying [two aircraft carrier battle groups](http://www.cbsnews.com/8301-202_162-57411165/navy-deploys-2nd-aircraft-carrier-to-persian-gulf-uss-enterprise-joins-abraham-lincoln-strike-group/) in the neighborhood along with an [assortment](http://www.wired.com/dangerroom/2012/04/armada-masses-near-iran/) of air and amphibious-assault capabilities.One can debate the extent to which Washington’s long-running feud with Iran is driven by oil, but there is no question that the current crisis bears heavily on global oil supply prospects, both through Iran’s [threats](http://news.nationalpost.com/2011/12/27/iran-threatens-to-cut-off-oil-exports-if-sanctions-imposed-over-nuclear-activity/) to close the Strait of Hormuz in retaliation for forthcoming sanctions on Iranian oil exports, and the likelihood that any air strikes on Iranian nuclear facilities will lead to the same thing.  Either way, the U.S. military would undoubtedly [assume](http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2012/may/1/pentagon-planning-contingency-iran-n-korea/?page=all) the lead role in destroying Iranian military capabilities and restoring oil traffic through the Strait of Hormuz. This is the energy-driven crisis that just won’t go away.

US involvement in an Iran war causes extinction

Hirsch, prof of physics @ the University of Califorina at San Diego, April 10, 2008

(Seymour Hirsch, “Nuking Iran,” http://www.globalresearch.ca/index.php?context=viewArticle&code=HIR20060422&articleId=2317, Accessed 6/1/12] SM

**JH:** Iran is likely to respond to any US attack using its considerable missile arsenal against US forces in Iraq and elsewhere in the Persian Gulf. Israel may attempt to stay out of the conflict, it is not clear whether Iran would target Israel in a retaliatory strike but it is certainly possible. If the US attack includes nuclear weapons use against Iranian facilities, as I believe is very likely, rather than deterring Iran it will cause a much more violent response. Iranian military forces and militias are likely to storm into southern Iraq and the US may be forced to use nuclear weapons against them, causing large scale casualties and inflaming the Muslim world. There could be popular uprisings in other countries in the region like Pakistan, and of course a Shiite uprising in Iraq against American occupiers. Finally I would like to discuss the grave consequences to America and the world if the US uses nuclear weapons against Iran. First, the likelihood of terrorist attacks against Americans both on American soil and abroad will be enormously enhancedafter these events. And terrorist's attempts to get hold of "loose nukes" and use them against Americans will be enormously incentivized after the US used nuclear weapons against Iran. Second, it will destroy America's position as the leader of the free world. The rest of the world rightly recognizes that nuclear weapons are qualitatively different from all other weapons, and that there is no sharp distinction between small and large nuclear weapons, or between nuclear weapons targeting facilities versus those targeting armies or civilians. It will not condone the breaking of the nuclear taboo in an unprovoked war of aggression against a non-nuclear country, and the US will become a pariah state. Third, the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty will cease to exist, and many of its 182 non-nuclear-weapon-country signatories will strive to acquire nuclear weapons as a deterrentto an attack by a nuclear nation. With no longer a taboo against the use of nuclear weapons, any regional conflict may go nuclear and expand into global nuclear war. Nuclear weapons are million-fold more powerful than any other weapon, and the existing nuclear arsenals can obliterate humanity many times over. In the past, global conflicts terminated when one side prevailed. In the next global conflict we will all be gone before anybody has prevailed.

# 1aC High Speed Rail– Oil Dependence Advantage

A new and improved rail system built around electric fuel efficiency massively increases passenger demand, offsetting oil dependence from key transportation sectors

Ridlington & Kerth et al, policy analysts w/ the Frontier Group, environmental think tank in affiliation with the Public Interest Network, Fall 2010 [Wisconsin Public Interest Research Group – Elizabeth & Rob, Brian Imus & Bruce Speight, WISPIRG Foundation “Connecting the Midwest, - How a Faster Passenger Rail Network Could Speed Travel and Boost the Economy,” Accessed 6/1/12] SM

Cars and airplanes are almost exclusively powered by oil—increasing America’s de- pendence on a limited supply of fossil fuel largely controlled by other nations. Spikes in oil prices in recent years have had dra- matic affects on Americans’ willingness to drive or fly to their destinations. Expand- ing and improving passenger rail service can reduce the nation’s dependence on oil and insulate travelers from the impact of fuel price spikes. Intercity passenger rail—even when powered by diesel-electric locomotives—is more fuel-efficient than car or air travel, particularly for trips in the 100 to 500-mile range. On average, an Amtrak passenger uses 30 percent less energy per mile than a car passenger, and 34 percent less than a passenger in an SUV or pickup truck.19 In Europe, high speed trains consume ap- proximately one-third the amount of fuel per passenger as airplanes.20 Fuel use per passenger for trains and airplanes depends on how full the vehicle is. The figures here are based on historic ridership rates; higher ridership would result in lower per-pas- senger energy use.These numbers underestimate rail’s oil savings compared with airplanes. Rail is most competitive against oil-intensive short airplane flights with trip distances of 500 miles or less—a traveler is much more likely to choose rail over air travel from Chicago to Minneapolis than from Chicago to Miami. (For instance, trains capture 99 percent of the air/rail share of travel between Chicago and Milwaukee.21) Short flights use more fuel per mile than longer flights, since a plane uses much of its fuel in takeoff. A modernized passenger rail network in the future will also likely use less oil than American passenger rail service does today. The Midwest High Speed Rail Association estimates that a Midwestern rail network would reduce dependence on oil by 40 million barrels annually, or the amount of oil consumed by 2.9 million cars in a year.22 Moreover, a Midwestern rail system will save even more oil in coming decades as targeted portions of the network are converted to carry electric-powered trains. Currently, about 40 percent of American intercity passenger rail is pow- ered by electricity, while 80 percent of European rail service is electric.23 As the Midwestern rail system develops, plans call for electrifying key segments of the track, such as the proposed 220 mph route between Chicago and St. Louis.24 As train service becomes faster, more reliable and more frequent it will also draw more passengers, further lowering per-passenger fuel usage. The more seats on a train are filled, the less fuel is used per passenger. Amtrak trains are typically about 50 percent full, compared with 70 percent for European high-speed trains.25 As rail travel in America is improved and draws more passengers, it is likely they will be carrying larger loads of travelers, raising the fuel efficiency of a trip on a train. Finally, the location of passenger rail hubs in downtown areas can encourage and support land-use patterns that reduce the need to drive, further curbing oil use. In Chicago, Milwaukee, St. Louis, India- napolis, and elsewhere, train stations are centrally located near downtown busi- ness districts. A passenger rail station in a downtown area provides an inducement for businesses to locate nearby—just as airports spur development of office parks for businesses seeking close proximity to transportation and the construction of hotels and other traveler services.

1aC High Speed Rail– Oil Dependence Advantage

Addressing this dependence independently prevents geopolitical upheavals beyond Iran over remaining oil reserves – an advanced high-speed rail system is the only realistic way to reduce oil dependence within the transportation sector

Perl, professor of Urban Studies & Political Science @ Simon Fraser University in Canada, director of the Urban Studies Program, November 19, 2011 [Dr. Anthony, “How Green is the High Speed Rail,” http://www.cnn.com/2011/11/18/world/how-green-is-hsr/index.html, Accessed 6/1/12] SM

Any debate about the future of high-speed rail must consider where this mobility option fits into the 'big picture' of how transportation systems meet looming economic, energy and environmental challenges. In a world where 95% of motorized mobility is currently fueled by oil, high-speed rail offers a proven means of reducing dependence on this increasingly problematic energy source.This value of using proven electric propulsion technology should not be underestimated when both the time and money to deploy energy alternatives are in short supply.In our recent book [Transport Revolutions](http://www.newsociety.com/Books/T/Transport-Revolutions), Richard Gilbert and I documented the economic, environmental and political dividends to be gained from replacing the internal combustion engines powering today's aircraft, cars, and motor vehicles with traction motors that can be powered by multiple energy sources delivered through the electric grid.Since electricity is an energy carrier, it can be generated from a mix of sources that incorporate the growing share of geothermal, hydro, solar, and wind energy that will be produced in the years ahead. And because electric motors are three to four times more efficient than internal combustion engines, an immediate improvement will precede introducing renewable energy into transportation.**Grid**-**connected traction offers the only realistic option for significantly reducing oil** **use in transportation** **over the next 10 years**.**If such a shift does not begin** during this decade, **the risk of a global economic** **collapse and/or geo-political conflict over** the world's remaining **oil reserves would become dangerously** **elevated**. Making a significant dent in transportation's oil addiction within 10 years is sooner than fuel cells, biofuels, battery-electric vehicles and other alternative energy technologies will be ready to deliver change. Biofuels that could power aircraft now cost hundreds of dollars per gallon to produce. Batteries that a big enough charge to power vehicles between cities are still too big and expensive to make electric cars and buses affordable.But grid-connected electric trains have been operating at scale and across continents for over a century. And when the Japanese introduced modern high-speed trains through their Shinkansen, in 1964, the utility of electric trains was greatly extended.Since the 1980s, countries across Asia and Europe have been building new high-speed rail infrastructure to deploy electric mobility between major cities up to 1,000 kilometers apart. For intercity trips between 200 and 1,000 kilometers, high-speed trains have proven their success in drawing passengers out of both cars and planes, as well as meeting new travel demand with a much lower carbon footprint than driving or flying could have done.If we are serious about reducing oil's considerable risks to global prosperity and sustainability, we will not miss the opportunity offered by high-speed rail to decrease transportation's oil consumption sooner, rather than later.

1aC HIGH SPEED RAIL - Competitiveness Advantage

Current infrastructure funding goes to maintaining the current highway system. This focus kills US economic competitiveness

BAF Ed Fund, bipartisan coalition of elected officials focused on US investment in infrastructure, 2011 [Building America’s Future Educational Fund, “Building America’s Future – Falling Apart and Falling Behind,” Transportation Infrastructure Report] SM

In stark contrast to our most agile and aggressive foreign competitors, the U.S. stands increasingly alone in our failure to reorient our transportation spending according to a new forward-looking vision that could build a transportation network fit for a 21st-century economy. Without a similarly strategic plan of attack to create a state-of-the-art transportation network, the U.S. will be left far behind. This striking lack of vision is a debilitating problem. Instead of taking a comprehensive look at the current weaknesses in our national network, we are largely following the same policy goals and guidelines announced when Eisenhower was president. As a result, federal transportation policy is skewed toward maintaining and expanding the Interstate Highway System. We’ve put relatively little emphasis on targeting our most economically strategic trade corridors or building new transport systems to meet our 21st-century economic needs. Government transportation spending, at all levels of government, is overwhelmingly directed toward roads. Since 1956, the largest portion of public funding for transpor- tation infrastructure was dedicated to building and maintaining highways.1 Although a small portion (15%) of the federal gas tax is dedicated to a fund for mass transit, the vast majority of federal gas tax revenue is spent on highways. The same is true for state gas taxes: 30 states are actually constitutionally or statutorily required to spend 100% of their gas tax revenues on roads. The disproportionate channeling of transportation dollars toward highways has encouraged more and more construction of roads, even as the demand rises for other forms of transportation. The last multi-year infrastructure law passed by Congress, the 2005 Safe Accountable Flexible Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (known as SAFETEA-LU), authorized $286.4 billion of federal spending on surface transportation projects through 2009—nearly 70% of which has been spent on highways, and only 1% of which has been directed to ports, national freight gateways, and trade corridors. After that, the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA) provided an additional $48 billion in federal stimulus dollars for transportation projects, most of which also went to roads. There is no question that America must continue to provide adequate funding to ensure the efficiency and safety of our highways, roads, and bridges since they will always remain an important component of our transportation network. But despite the emphasis on our road system, we are not meeting the challenge. Congestion still predominates, especially in our metro areas, and the system has serious safety challeng- es. For example, America currently has more than 69,000 structurally deficient bridges, more than 11% of all the bridges in our country.2 Meanwhile, underinvestment in airports, in commuter and freight rail, and in ports costs us jobs, economic growth, and access to overseas markets. Compared to the signifi- cant sums dedicated to roads, government spending on other modes of transportation is relatively meager. The U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) spends about $10.2 billion a year on public transit, or less than a quarter of what it spends on highways. The federal government contributes even less to Amtrak’s operation costs. In contrast to its highway funding programs, USDOT encourages greater state contribu- tions to transit projects. Since the majority of states are constitutionally or statutorily prohibited from using state gas taxes for public transit projects, USDOT’s funding requirements are a tough imposition on states. Unwilling or unable to match federal contributions with general revenue funds, states may be more inclined to seek funding for more road projects than for new transit projects.

1aC HIGH SPEED RAIL - Competitiveness Advantage

**The transportation sector is the bedrock of American competitiveness – sustained federal commitment is the only way the US will remain the economic powerhouse**

BAF Ed Fund, bipartisan coalition of elected officials focused on US investment in infrastructure, 2011 [Building America’s Future Educational Fund, “Building America’s Future – Falling Apart and Falling Behind,” Transportation Infrastructure Report, Accessed 6/1/12] SM

Getting America back on track economically is not going to be easy. But to succeed, we must think and act anew. During a time when Congress is cutting budgets, it may seem incongruous to step forward with an ambitious program of rebuilding our national transportation. But the Erie Canal was begun not long after economic collapse; Lincoln’s Transcontinen- tal Railroad was launched during a time when the country was still torn apart by war; and even Eisenhower’s Interstate Highway System was launched amid concerns over deficit spending. There are always excuses to delay tough decisions, but the time has come for the U.S. to join China, India, Canada, Brazil, France, Spain, and the United Kingdom by committing to a long-term infrastructure revitalization plan. It should focus on transportation but should also include our water and wastewater systems, our dams, our electric grid, and our broadband system. To be as significant in scale as the plans adopted by our competitor nations, it must spur an investment of at least $200 billion a year.7 Not all of that needs to be a federal commitment—state and local government and the private sector must also do their share. And it need not all be new invest- ment because a significant amount of dollars should be forthcoming from the gas tax and other fees. But make no mistake: We cannot long stay atop the global economy without a significant new federal commitment. Inaction by the federal government would mean consigning our children and theirs to economic decline, and watching as other countries surge ahead and enjoy the fruit of their infrastructure investments for themselves. That would fly in the face of America’s history—and it would squander the America that our parents and theirs worked so hard to build. To remain the world’s economic superpower, to bequeath to future generations a country that is still on the rise, we must act with the same foresight and boldness that has always characterized American leadership. The foundations of our national economy are cracking—and it is not enough to repair the cracks. We must extend the foundation, stronger and wider, to support a new century of economic growth—and a new century of American greatness. Doing that will require not only visionary leadership, but bi-partisan cooperation. Rebuilding America’s future cannot be a Democratic or Republican political cause; it must be a national undertaking. And if it is, there will be no stopping it.

**Continued decline in competitiveness eradicates US primacy**

Lawrence, former member of President Clinton’s Council of Economic Advisers, 2002 [Robert Z., “Competitiveness,” <http://www.econlib.org/LIBRARY/Enc/Competitiveness.html>, Accessed 6/1/12]

It is important to recognize that this relative decline of the United States has differing implications for American power and for American living standards. The power of a nation **(**i.e., its ability to influence the actions of other nations**)** flows in large part from its relative economic capacity—the economic performance of the United States compared with other nations, particularly its adversaries. In this respectthe power of the United States is less in a richer worldeconomy**.** On the other hand, the welfare of a nation's citizens is largely a function of its absolute economic capacity. A nation's living standards are primarily based on its productivity and on its ability to exchange its products for those of others on international markets. Both of these effects are enhanced when increased innovation abroad provides U.S. consumers access to better products and U.S. manufacturers more opportunities to emulate foreign products and processes**. The** UnitedStates no longer has to carry the burdenof global innovationalone**—**increasingly**,** American firms can learn from others**.**

1aC HIGH SPEED RAIL - Competitiveness Advantage

A collapse of US primary from loss of competitiveness ensures extinction

Zhang et al, researcher @ Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Washington, D.C., January 22, 2011 [Yuhan and Lin Shi, independent consultant for the Eurasia Group, “America’s Decline: A Harbinger of Conflict and Rivalry,” http://www.eastasiaforum.org/2011/01/22/americas-decline-a-harbinger-of-conflict-and-rivalry/ Accessed 6/1/12] SM

As history attests, power decline and redistribution result in military confrontation. For example, in the late 19th century America’s emergence as a regional power saw it launch its first overseas war of conquest towards Spain. By the turn of the 20th century, accompanying the increase in US power and waning of British power, the American Navy had begun to challenge the notion that Britain ‘rules the waves.’ Such a notion would eventually see the US attain the status of sole guardians of the Western Hemisphere’s security to become the order-creating Leviathan shaping the international system with democracy and rule of law.

Defining this US-centred system are three key characteristics: enforcement of property rights, constraints on the actions of powerful individuals and groups and some degree of equal opportunities for broad segments of society. As a result of such political stability, free markets, liberal trade and flexible financial mechanisms have appeared. And, with this, many countries have sought opportunities to enter this system, proliferating stable and cooperative relations.However, what will happen to these advances as America’s influence declines? Given that America’s authority, although sullied at times, has benefited people across much of Latin America, Central and Eastern Europe, the Balkans, as well as parts of Africa and, quite extensively, Asia, the answer to this question could affect global society in a profoundly detrimental way.Public imagination and academia have anticipated that a post-hegemonic world would return to the problems of the 1930s: regional blocs, trade conflicts and strategic rivalry. Furthermore, multilateral institutions such as the IMF, the World Bank or the WTO might give way to regional organisations.For example, Europe and East Asia would each step forward to fill the vacuum left by Washington’s withering leadership to pursue their own visions of regional political and economic orders. Free markets would become more politicised — and, well, less free — and major powers would compete for supremacy.Additionally, such power plays have historically possessed a zero-sum element. In the late 1960s and 1970s, US economic power declined relative to the rise of the Japanese and Western European economies, with the US dollar also becoming less attractive. And, as American power eroded, so did international regimes (such as the Bretton Woods System in 1973).A world without American hegemony is one where great power wars re-emerge, the liberal international system is supplanted by an authoritarian one, and trade protectionism devolves into restrictive, anti-globalisation barriers. This, at least, is one possibility we can forecast in a future that will inevitably be devoid of unrivalled US primacy.

1aC HIGH SPEED RAIL - Competitiveness Advantage

No alt causes - a global consensus proves high speed rail should be the central focus in any sustainable investment in transportation infrastructure – US is comparatively lacking

BAF Ed Fund, bipartisan coalition of elected officials focused on US investment in infrastructure, 2011 [Building America’s Future Educational Fund, “Building America’s Future – Falling Apart and Falling Behind,” Transportation Infrastructure Report, Accessed 6/1/12] SM

A global consensus has emerged that high-speed rail is the high-capacity, low-energy solution for the high-tech, low-carbon economy of the future. Nearly 15,000 miles of high-speed rail has been built around the world—and almost none is in the U.S. It is time for the U.S. to join the competition. But for high- speed rail to deliver, it must be truly high-speed, and it must run in the right places. Instead of trying to cobble together a national high-speed rail network through thinly spread funding across the country, federal energy and resources should focus on the regions clearly calling for new high-speed transit: the Northeast Corridor between Washington, D.C., and Boston; the Los Angeles-San Francisco corridor in California; and the hub-and-spoke region around Chicago. We may not get all the routes we want, but we will get the high- speed trains we need. Of course, driving will continue to suit many Americans’ lifestyles. But as more Ameri- cans continue to concentrate in major metropolitan areas and congestion worsens, demand will increase for more local transit alternatives. Americans are already demon-strating interest in and support for new forms of mass transit: New light rail systems are thriving in places like Salt Lake City and Phoenix, and they were funded in part by local sales tax increases approved by voter initiatives. And as more Americans seek to fly through our already congested airports, we will need high-speed rail alternatives to get everyone where they want to go. Experiences in places like Germany— which built one of the leading high-speed rail networks in the world while maintaining the quality and accessibility of its famous autobahn—demonstrate that investing in alternate modes of transportation is a way to improve, not undermine, the quality of highway systems.

1aC HIGH SPEED RAIL - Competitiveness Advantage

Specifically, a national high-speed rail network is key to sustained US economic competitiveness; costs of development will decrease over time

Kunz, president and CEO of the U.S. High Speed Rail Association, a trade group that focuses on advancing a national network, March 10, 2011 [Andy, “U.S. High Speed Rail: Time to Hop Aboard or Be Left Behind,” http://e360.yale.edu/feature/us\_high-speed\_rail\_time\_to\_hop\_aboard\_or\_be\_left\_behind/2378/, Accessed 6/1/12] SM

Enhancing U.S. energy security is just one reason the country needs a state-of-the-art high-speed rail system, which by 2030 could transport millions of people each day between America’s cities. A national high-speed rail system would generate millions of jobs; help revive the country’s manufacturing sector by creating a new industry producing the trains, steel, and related components; alleviate pressure on a crumbling transportation infrastructure; and lessen the ever-worsening congestion on America’s highways and at its airports, where delays cause an estimated $156 billion in losses to the U.S. economy annually. And then there is climate change and the large-scale reduction of CO2 emissions that would result from the creation of an interstate high-speed rail system and the expansion of regional commuter rail systems.As a high-speed rail network spreads across the U.S. in the coming decades, the costs of operating the national transportation system will decline each year to the point where the savings will eventually exceed the estimated $600 billion cost of building the rail system. Although public funds will be used to cover much of the construction costs, the network will perform best if operated by private companies.The **U.S. must build a national high-speed rail network if it hopes to maintain its competitiveness in the world economy**. China and Europe are now moving ahead with their high-speed rail networks at breakneck speed, which means that in a decade or two they will have significantly reduced their dependence on imported oil, created tens of millions of new jobs, and saved their countries trillions of dollars by vastly improving the productivity of their economies thanks to a low-carbon transportation sector that moves people and goods at speeds that could one day hit 300 miles per hour, or more.The U.S. can be part of that future. But if more states follow the example of Florida, Wisconsin, and Ohio, the country will remain shackled by 19th- and 20th-century forms of transportation in a 21st-century world. Contemplate this image: China, Europe, Russia, South America, and other parts of the globe are streaking by at 250 miles per hour while the likes of Governor Scott are stuck in a traffic jam on an interstate, watching the trains whiz past.

1aC HIGH SPEED RAIL – Solvency

Federal government funding is key to create a national high-speed rail network – stable funding attracts needed investor confidence for rail equipment while equitable federal to state funding can overcome imbalanced federal allocation standards

Ridlington & Kerth et al, policy analysts with the Frontier Group, environmental think take in affiliation with the Public Interest Network, Fall 2010 [Wisconsin Public Interest Research Group – Elizabeth & Rob, Brian Imus [Illinois PIRG Education Fund & Bruce Speight, WISPIRG Foundation “Connecting the Midwest, - How a Faster Passenger Rail Network Could Speed Travel and Boost the Economy,” Accessed 6/9/12] SM

The federal government will necessar- ily be the largest source of financing for high-speed rail construction. In filling that role, federal policymakers should aim to bind state and regional projects together as pieces of a national vision for transportation, and also take advantage of their position to ensure that investments in high-speed rail result in the highest quality system possible. Midwestern lead- ers—whether at the state level, or as mem- bers of Congress—should push the federal government to hold to these principles, and where appropriate commit their own states to corresponding actions. America’s passenger rail system is in its current sorry shape largely because of the failure to adequately invest in maintaining and upgrading the system over the last half century. During a postwar period in which America built tens of thousands of miles of gleaming new expressways and hundreds of airports, our rail system was allowed to deteriorate such that today, at the beginning of the 21st century, we still rely, in some places, on infrastructure dating from before the Civil War. Trips can take far longer today than they did in the past; in 1950 travelers from Chicago to Minneapolis would arrive in four hours aboard the Olympian Hiawatha, but today the same trip takes eight and a half hours on Amtrak’s Empire Builder.136 The worst, most costly mistake Amer- ica can make going into the 21st century is to not invest adequate resources in upgrading and expanding our passenger rail network. Failing to invest will neces- sitate even greater spending on highways and airports, deepen our costly depen- dence on foreign oil, and forestall the economic growth that can result from improved connections among people, businesses and institutions. The first step in determining an adequate level of investment is to recognize that America is digging out of a very deep hole when it comes to our nation’s rail infrastructure. If the federal government had invested the same amount of money over the last half-century in rail as it had in aviation, roughly $400 billion worth of upgrades would have been possible. That amount of money would have been more than enough to build a high-speed rail network worthy of the world’s most economically advanced nation. To begin to dig out of that hole, the federal government should invest steadily increasing levels of funding in passenger rail. We probably cannot hope to match the $300 billion China will be investing in its high-speed rail system between now and 2020, but we should endeavor to match the level of investment provided by other industrialized nations, as a share of GDP, in their rail networks. To prompt that com- mitment, meanwhile, states should demon- strate a willingness to fund rail operations within their borders at an appropriate level, recognizing that the economic benefits of doing so well outweigh the costs. Currently, America’s public investment in inter-city rail is far lower than that of other industrialized countries. Even with the unprecedented investments in passenger rail included in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, the U.S. government investment in the national rail system is far below that of many Euro- pean countries per capita and as a share of GDP. (See Figure 5.) These figures do not include investments made by private U.S. freight railroads, but in any case, to create a truly world-class passenger rail system, the United States will need to invest far more than it has historically. As important as the lack of funding has been the instability of funding for passenger rail in the United States, which has made it difficult to undertake long-term capital planning and to build the investor confi- dence necessary to establish vibrant domes- tic industries to supply rail equipment. To ensure stable, continuing funding for high-speed rail, the next federal trans- portation bill should include a dedicated allocation of funds for passenger rail and the federal government should match state investments in rail at no less than the same 80:20 ratio it does for highways. By financ- ing transportation projects equitably, states will be able to make rational transportation decisions based on the needs of their resi- dents, rather than on the chances of secur- ing a lucrative federal match. State leaders need to recognize the perverse effects that existing imbalances in federal allocations have had, and advocate for funding mecha- nisms that will allow their states to weigh costs and benefits evenhandedly. Funding could come from a variety of sources, including a national infrastructure bank, “value capture” mechanisms to share windfalls from increased land values near rail stations, revenues from cap-and-trade programs for carbon dioxide emissions, air- port surcharges, or an enhanced highway trust fund augmented through higher fuel taxes or vehicle mileage fees.

1aC HIGH SPEED RAIL – Solvency

And, the federal government is key to create national standards for high-speed rail infrastructure through significant investment

Ridlington & Kerth et al, policy analysts with the Frontier Group, environmental think take in affiliation with the Public Interest Network, Fall 2010 [Wisconsin Public Interest Research Group – Elizabeth & Rob, Brian Imus [Illinois PIRG Education Fund & Bruce Speight, WISPIRG Foundation “Connecting the Midwest, - How a Faster Passenger Rail Network Could Speed Travel and Boost the Economy,” Accessed 6/9/12] SM

The federal government should play a central role in developing standards for high-speed rail technology and infra- structure in an effort to reduce the cost of high-speed rail, improve replicability of successful projects, and maximize the efficiency of manufacturers. Ideally, the federal government would set technologi- cal standards for projects receiving federal funding that are specific enough to allow for the development of economies of scale, yet broad enough to allow for competition among various potential suppliers. As referenced in the discussion about pub- lic-private coordination, actions by freight railroads can have a large impact on the performance of passenger rail service. As the federal government issues financial grants to states for high speed rail, the Federal Railroad Administration has de- veloped guidelines to ensure that federal funds will benefit passenger service and not just freight service. Most of the initial high speed rail improvements that states are planning on undertaking will involve upgrades to infrastructure owned by freight railroads. The Federal Railroad Administration is requiring that railroads commit to specific travel time improvements for passenger rail and to invest additional funds if those ser- vice outcomes are not met.138 In addition, excess track capacity that is not needed immediately for passenger rail service must remain available for future passenger rail use, even if that excess capacity was built with a mix of federal and private funds. While working cooperatively with pri- vate freight railroads, the Federal Railroad Administration should continue its efforts to hold those entities accountable if their activities hinder expansion and successful operation of faster passenger rail service. Finally, the nation needs to articulate a vision for the future of America’s rail network and measure progress toward the achievement of that vision. The Obama administration’s efforts begin fleshing out a vision for high-speed rail in America, but a fully developed vision would include a compelling national goal—for example, linking all major cities within 500 miles of one another with high-speed rail by mid-century. In the Midwest, at least one 220-mph train route should be completed by 2020 to demonstrate the effectiveness and ridership appeal of such a line. In addition, existing Amtrak service should be upgraded by 2020 to operate at speeds of at least 90 miles per hour. Once such a goal has been articulated, state and federal leaders should measure progress toward it, so that the public can gauge the success of the effort.

Ext – Inherency – No High Speed Rail Funding

Congress has put the brakes on funding while Obama’s original stimulus funding for a national rail system was vastly misappropriated

Schaper, National Desk Reporter – NPR, May 13, 2012 [David, “Lack Of Support Puts The Brakes On High-Speed Rail,” http://www.npr.org/2012/05/13/152587645/lack-of-support-puts-the-brakes-on-high-speed-railAccessed 6/1/12] SM

Three years ago, President Obama was rolling out an ambitious vision for high-speed rail in America. "Imagine whisking through towns at speeds over 100 mph," the president said at the time.Today, there are a few Amtrak trains going that fast, but for the most part, the president's plans for high-speed trains have slowed considerably.On Amtrak's Wolverine service, which goes from Chicago to Ann Arbor, Mich., and then to Detroit and Pontiac, Mich., the train reaches speeds of up to 110 mph. It's the fastest of any U.S. train outside the Northeast Corridor. It is quite a feat, even though the train is only able to go that fast over about a 90-mile portion of the trip."It's got to be viewed as only the beginning," says Joe Szabo, administrator of the Federal Railroad Administration. He says additional track and signal improvements are underway to help speed up trains throughout the Midwest."So in the next two to two-and-a-half years, you're going to see almost 80 percent of Chicago-Detroit and almost 80 percent of Chicago-St. Louis at sustained speeds of 110 mph."That would reduce travel times on those routes to fewer than four hours, making the train faster than driving and competitive with flying, says Szabo.Both the Michigan and Illinois routes are benefiting because other states have been turning down funding for high-speed rail funds.Mixed AcceptanceRepublican governors in Wisconsin, Ohio and Florida sent back hundreds of millions of dollars in stimulus funding. They argued that few people would ride the trains, which would leave their states on the hook for millions in operating subsidies.So that makes Michigan's Republican Gov. Rick Snyder an outlier of sorts because he sees spending on high-speed rail as a wise investment."Our folks in Michigan are looking for it," says Michigan transportation director Kirk Steudle. "They're interested, they want to ride it; the ridership numbers are going up and it proves that passenger transportation is a very viable option in Michigan for the corridor between Detroit and Chicago."Amtrak says it had a record number of riders nationwide last year. With gas prices still relatively high, the rail service is on track for another record year.But it's hardly smooth sailing for fast trains in this country.Scattered Focus"Increasing top speeds to 110 mph does not necessarily make a high-speed rail service," says Ken Orski, a former top U.S. Department of Transportation official who now publishes a transportation newsletter. He says what really counts is the average speed over an entire trip, and that's where Amtrak has trouble.Since most Amtrak trains run on freight railroad tracks, freight traffic backups often cause lengthy Amtrak delays. The poor condition of some stretches of leased track can slow passenger trains to just 20 to 25 mph until repairs can be madeOrski says high-speed rail works best in densely populated corridors between cities only a few hundred miles apart, such as the Northeast corridor between Boston, New York, Philadelphia and Washington, D.C."That is where the administration should have focused its efforts, rather than scatter $10 billion on some 140 projects in 32 states," Orski says.That $10 billion mostly came from the stimulus package three years ago, and a big chunk of it went to California, which is developing a 200-mph, high-speed rail service between Los Angeles and San Francisco.It's a project many experts say shows some promise, but its ballooning cost and planning problems lead some critics to call it the train to nowhere. Congress has now put on the brakes on funding for high-speed rail, but high-speed rail advocates say if Amtrak can at least get enough funding to keep making improvements, that might whet the appetite for greater rail spending.

US lacks investment in a national high-speed rail network, resulting in an outdated transportation system well behind other developed nations

Hart, director of government relations at Quarles & Brady, and vice president of government affairs for the US High Speed Rail Association, May 23, 2012 [Politico, Thomas, Jr., “High Speed Rail’s Many Benefits,” http://www.politico.com/news/stories/0512/76682\_Page2.html, Accessed 6/1/12] SM

Even as Congress looks into a new surface transportation bill, U.S. transportation systems confront daunting challenges of overcrowding and disrepair. Delays and waste cost the nation more than $100 billion per year in lost time, productivity and energy. The U.S. needs modern public transportation not dependent on oil or traffic patterns. Most developed nations now have high-speed rail, sleek trains that reach more than 200 mph. Here, this option would be most viable in two distinct corridors on the East and West Coasts – the Northeast Corridor, from Boston to Washington, and California.The Northeast Corridor is already one of most valuable U.S. transportation assets. With I-95, it’s the only continuous link between the major population centers of Washington, Baltimore, Philadelphia, New York and Boston. This is the nation’s most densely populated region with 18 percent of the U.S. population living in just 2 percent of its land area. The NEC region alone would be the world’s sixth-largest economy, with a gross domestic product of $2.59 trillion.The NEC is already a mature rail corridor — Amtrak and regional rail services show ridership spikes whenever gas prices increase. Amtrak’s Acela service, however, averages only 80 mph. True high-speed rail in this corridor could prove competitive with air travel, particularly because rail can easily connect to other local and regional transit networks.

Ext – Oil Dependence Advantage—High Speed Rail Key

HIGH SPEED RAIL effectively curbs US oil dependence and successfully competes with the auto and airplane businesses

Baxandall et al, Ph. D., US PIRG Education Fund, Fall 2010 [Phineas, Tony Dutzik & Jordan Schneider, Frontier Group, Erin Steva, CALPIRG Education Fund, - “A Track Record of Success High-Speed Rail Around the World and Its Promise for America,” – US Public Interest Research Group, Accessed 6/1/12] SM

The transportation system in the United States is highly dependent on oil. Fully 95 percent of all energy used for the nation’s transportation comes from petroleum.58 That dependence on oil—not only for cars but also for airplanes, trucks and trains— leaves Americans and U.S. businesses at the mercy of volatile world oil markets, erodes our energy independence, and hurts our economy. By building high-speed rail, the United States will reduce its dependence on oil for transportation—a sound, long- term investment in the nation’s economic future. Rail travel—particularly on electric trains—has some inherent energy-sav- ing advantages compared with cars or airplanes. Both cars and airplanes are, at the moment, completely reliant on oil, whereas trains can be powered by electricity generated from a variety of fuels, including renewable energy. Electric motors are also inherently more energy efﬁcient than the internal combustion engines used in cars and trucks, which dissipate much of the energy in their fuel as heat. High-speed rail also competes favorably in terms of energy consumption with short-haul air- craft, which expend much of their energy on takeoff. (See page 9.) High-speed rail may also have secondary energy-saving impacts by encouraging pat- terns of development—including greater concentration of residential or business activity near high-speed rail stations—that reduce the distance of trips made in day- to-day travel.

2aC Impact Add-On – Oil Dependence = Climate Change

Oil dependence is one of the largest sources of GHG emissions – time to act is now

Lefton, Researcher for Progressive Media, January 13, 2010 [American Progress - Rebecca, “Oil Dependence is a Dangerous Habit,” Transportation%20Topic/Looked%20At/Oil%20Dependence%20Is%20a%20Dangerous%20Habit.webarchive, Accessed 6/9/12] SM

Meanwhile, America’s voracious oil appetite continues to contribute to another growing national security concern: climate change. Burning oil is one of the largest sources of greenhouse gas emissions and therefore a major driver of climate change, which if left unchecked could have very serious security global implications. Burning oil imported from “dangerous or unstable” countries alone released 640.7 million metric tons of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere, which is the same as keeping more than 122.5 million passenger vehicles on the road.Recent studies found that the gravest consequences of climate change could threaten to destabilize governments, intensify terrorist actions, and [displace hundreds of millions of people](http://www.americanprogress.org/issues/2009/12/on_the_move.html) due to increasingly frequent and severe natural disasters, higher incidences of diseases such as malaria, rising sea levels, and food and water shortages.A 2007 analysis by the Center for American Progress concludes that the geopolitical implications of climate change could include wide-spanning social, political, and environmental consequences such as “destabilizing levels of internal migration” in developing countries and more immigration into the United States. The U.S. military will face increasing [pressure](http://www.twq.com/08winter/docs/08winter_podesta.pdf) to deal with these crises, which will further put our military at risk and require already strapped resources to be sent abroad.

2aC Impact Add-On – Oil Dependence = US Economy

Oil dependence makes economic growth and recovery impossible

Lefton, Researcher for Progressive Media, January 13, 2010 [American Progress - Rebecca, “Oil Dependence is a Dangerous Habit,” Transportation%20Topic/Looked%20At/Oil%20Dependence%20Is%20a%20Dangerous%20Habit.webarchive, Accessed 6/9/12] SM

A recent [report](http://www.americanprogress.org/issues/2010/01/us_trade_trap.html) on the November 2009 U.S. trade deficit found that rising oil imports widened our deficit, increasing the gap between our imports and exports. This is but one example that our economic recovery and long-term growth is inexorably linked to our reliance on foreign oil. The United States is spending approximately $1 billion a day overseas on oil instead of investing the funds at home, where our economy sorely needs it. Burning oil that exacerbates global warming also poses serious threats to our national security and the world’s security. For these reasons we need to kick the oil addiction by investing in clean-energy reform to reduce oil demand, while taking steps to curb global warming.Ext – Competitiveness – Advantage Uniqueness – State Funding

US is sitting the high speed rail competition out – state action is devoting funds away from meaningful HRS projects

BAF Ed Fund, bipartisan coalition of elected officials focused on US investment in infrastructure, 2011 [Building America’s Future Educational Fund, “Building America’s Future – Falling Apart and Falling Behind,” Transportation Infrastructure Report, Accessed 6/1/12] SM

Comparatively speaking, the U.S. is practi- cally sitting the high-speed rail competition out. The Obama Administration has an- nounced a vision of a nation-wide high- speed rail network. But $10 billion in initial funding pales in comparison with our competitors’ investments. And spreading that $10 billion around 36 states runs the risk of achieving nothing at all. As we watch states change course after the 2010 election and decline some of the high-speed rail funds they had been awarded, we must concede that President Obama is not all right on this issue, and the new governors are not all wrong. Some states are planning trains that will not run at truly high speeds—in which case they won’t create genuinely attractive travel options to ease our air and road congestion problems. Some states are planning to improve existing passenger lines, rather than build new dedicated high-speed lines—which means the passenger trains will still have to share the tracks with freight and be accordingly subjected to delays. And some states are planning projects that simply don’t make economic sense—or at least should not be considered a top national priority.

The direction of transportation funding is killing overall US economic competitiveness – funding goes to maintaining the current highway system versus other key modes of transportation

BAF Ed Fund, bipartisan coalition of elected officials focused on US investment in infrastructure, 2011 [Building America’s Future Educational Fund, “Building America’s Future – Falling Apart and Falling Behind,” Transportation Infrastructure Report, Accessed 6/1/12] SM

In stark contrast to our most agile and aggressive foreign competitors, the U.S. stands increasingly alone in our failure to reorient our transportation spending according to a new forward-looking vision that could build a transportation network fit for a 21st-century economy. Without a similarly strategic plan of attack to create a state-of-the-art transportation network, the U.S. will be left far behind. This striking lack of vision is a debilitating problem. Instead of taking a comprehensive look at the current weaknesses in our national network, we are largely following the same policy goals and guidelines announced when Eisenhower was president. As a result, federal transportation policy is skewed toward maintaining and expanding the Interstate Highway System. We’ve put relatively little emphasis on targeting our most economically strategic trade corridors or building new transport systems to meet our 21st-century economic needs. Government transportation spending, at all levels of government, is overwhelmingly directed toward roads. Since 1956, the largest portion of public funding for transpor- tation infrastructure was dedicated to building and maintaining highways.1 Although a small portion (15%) of the federal gas tax is dedicated to a fund for mass transit, the vast majority of federal gas tax revenue is spent on highways. The same is true for state gas taxes: 30 states are actually constitutionally or statutorily required to spend 100% of their gas tax revenues on roads. The disproportionate channeling of transportation dollars toward highways has encouraged more and more construction of roads, even as the demand rises for other forms of transportation. The last multi-year infrastructure law passed by Congress, the 2005 Safe Accountable Flexible Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (known as SAFETEA-LU), authorized $286.4 billion of federal spending on surface transportation projects through 2009—nearly 70% of which has been spent on highways, and only 1% of which has been directed to ports, national freight gateways, and trade corridors. After that, the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA) provided an additional $48 billion in federal stimulus dollars for transportation projects, most of which also went to roads. There is no question that America must continue to provide adequate funding to ensure the efficiency and safety of our highways, roads, and bridges since they will always remain an important component of our transportation network. But despite the emphasis on our road system, we are not meeting the challenge. Congestion still predominates, especially in our metro areas, and the system has serious safety challeng- es. For example, America currently has more than 69,000 structurally deficient bridges, more than 11% of all the bridges in our country.2 Meanwhile, underinvestment in airports, in commuter and freight rail, and in ports costs us jobs, economic growth, and access to overseas markets. Compared to the signifi- cant sums dedicated to roads, government spending on other modes of transportation is relatively meager. The U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) spends about $10.2 billion a year on public transit, or less than a quarter of what it spends on highways. The federal government contributes even less to Amtrak’s operation costs. In contrast to its highway funding programs, USDOT encourages greater state contribu- tions to transit projects. Since the majority of states are constitutionally or statutorily prohibited from using state gas taxes for public transit projects, USDOT’s funding requirements are a tough imposition on states. Unwilling or unable to match federal contributions with general revenue funds, states may be more inclined to seek funding for more road projects than for new transit projects.

Ext – Competitiveness – Advantage Solvency – Funding Key 2 Manufacturing

Sustained federal funding for HRS creates a vibrant manufacturing base followed by substantial investment from other firms in the future

Ridlington & Kerth et al, policy analysts w/ the Frontier Group, environmental think tank in affiliation with the Public Interest Network, Fall 2010 [Wisconsin Public Interest Research Group – Elizabeth & Rob, Brian Imus & Bruce Speight, WISPIRG Foundation “Connecting the Midwest, - How a Faster Passenger Rail Network Could Speed Travel and Boost the Economy,” Accessed 6/1/12] SM

Construction of high-speed rail repre- sents a golden opportunity to rebuild the Midwest’s manufacturing base. By estab- lishing a lasting market for passenger rail companies, helping firms from the region acquire technology and expertise, and helping workers develop the skills to enter this new industry, Midwestern states can develop a new foothold in an international manufacturing industry. The single most important step that policymakers can take to build a domestic passenger rail manufacturing base is to commit adequate funding to high-speed rail over the long term. Midwestern firms will only invest in new production facilities and product lines if they are confident that there will be sustained demand for their products. By demonstrating an ongoing commitment to building and operating a high quality passenger rail system, the Midwestern states can create an environ- ment in which local manufacturers have a dependable base of demand from which to build. As discussed below, this will require a commitment from state and federal gov- ernment to provide stable funding for high speed rail operations and construction. Ultimately, the full economic benefit of a revived passenger rail industry lies in Midwestern firms producing not just for the region’s own needs, but also for the world market in passenger rail equipment. To that end, the Midwest should devise and implement a long-term strategy for building a vibrant, globally competitive passenger rail industry. Local manufac- turers are likely capable of producing the equipment needed for a 110 mph network, but for higher speed trains, of the sort that are under consideration the route between St. Louis and Chicago, foreign expertise will likely be required at first. As the Midwestern states look towards further upgrading their rail network in the future, they should consider how they can create a domestic manufacturing base for the high- tech equipment necessary. For example, South Korea licensed the technology for its high-speed rail system from a French com- pany, with the first trains manufactured in Europe and the rest domestically.134 Over time, Korean companies developed their own high-speed rail technology, which they now hope to export to other nations building high-speed rail networks.135

Ext –Competitiveness Adv Employment Scenario –Interconnectivity

HIGH SPEED RAIL solidifies the interconnectivity of megaregions within the Midwest, rapidly increases employment

Ridlington & Kerth et al, policy analysts w/ the Frontier Group, environmental think tank in affiliation with the Public Interest Network, Fall 2010 [Wisconsin Public Interest Research Group – Elizabeth & Rob, Brian Imus & Bruce Speight, WISPIRG Foundation “Connecting the Midwest, - How a Faster Passenger Rail Network Could Speed Travel and Boost the Economy,” Accessed 6/1/12] SM

Building a modern passenger rail network will be a boost to the Midwest’s economy. Making connections between our cities quicker and more convenient will bet- ter equip the region for the 21st century economy, and upgrading our railways will create tens of thousands of jobs. The 19th century was characterized by the phenomenal growth of the Midwest’s cities. Chicago, a town of less than a thou- sand people in the 1830s, grew to be the fifth-largest city in the world by 1900.26 Other cities, such as St. Louis, experienced similar meteoric rises. The 20th century, on the other hand, was characterized by the growth of suburbia and the development of metropolitan areas, knitted together by mass transit and, later, by highways. Today, many Midwestern metropolitan areas have far more people living in their suburbs than in the central city. Some analysts see the 21st century as being the era of the “megaregion”—areas of the country in which formerly distinct metropolitan areas are now merging into contiguous zones of integrated economic activity. One such megaregion is the “Great Lakes” region, comprising much of the Midwest.27 The development of economically suc- cessful regions depends upon the ability to share information and insights quickly and conveniently. The growth of the Internet and other forms of telecommunication has not replaced the vital role of face-to-face interactions in generating new ideas and in- creasing economic productivity. In-person business and technology meetings are con- sidered essential for building relationships and trust. Consider the benefits gained by students in Cleveland who come to hear a lecture from a university professor in Chicago, or of employees from throughout the Midwest called in for a one-day sales training in Indianapolis. Companies could also take advantage of the new convenient travel option to locate back-office support staff outside a major city, where office rents and costs of living are lower, while keeping them closely connected to staff at a front office in a busy downtown. This kind of regional integration benefits companies, residents of outlying areas, and cities and towns that can develop new connections to urban economic engines. Our current transportation system, unfortunately, does a poor job of connect- ing residents and workers in the region. The main highways linking cities within megaregions tend to be congested—think of I-71 and I-75 in Ohio, or I-90 and I-94 between Chicago and Madison. Air travel for short trips within the Midwest can be challenging as well. For many short flights, the amount of time that it takes to travel to the airport and go through security can be greater than the amount of time actually spent in flight. Passenger rail—particularly high-speed rail—has the potential to link cities within the Great Lakes megaregion together in a faster and more efficient way. Easier travel within Midwestern states means that busi- nesses and organizations will effectively be closer together, making it easier to travel between branches, meet with potential employees and clients, and make the other connections that strengthen an economy. It will also make the Midwest a more at- tractive location internationally, attracting potential economic boosts such as tourism and international meetings.

Ext –Competitiveness Adv Employment Scenario--Manufacturing Base

HIGH SPEED RAIL rejuvenates the Midwest manufacturing base – huge boost to overall economy

Ridlington & Kerth et al, policy analysts w/ the Frontier Group, environmental think tank in affiliation with the Public Interest Network, Fall 2010 [Wisconsin Public Interest Research Group – Elizabeth & Rob, Brian Imus & Bruce Speight, WISPIRG Foundation “Connecting the Midwest, - How a Faster Passenger Rail Network Could Speed Travel and Boost the Economy,” Accessed 6/1/12] SM

Building a high-speed rail network will also boost the economy by creating con- struction, manufacturing and operations jobs. The Midwest is well positioned to see growth in rail-related manufacturing capacity.

The region already has a well-estab- lished railroad equipment manufacturing industry. Those manufacturers are focused on the production of diesel locomotives and freight cars because, currently, almost all demand for rail equipment in North America is for diesel- and freight-related equipment.28 More than 29,000 workers are directly employed in the manufactur- ing of railroad rolling stock in the United States, with thousands of others in the sup- ply chains that provide parts and services to those manufacturers.29 Two of the five states with the largest number of workers in the railroad manufacturing sector are Midwestern states: Illinois and Indiana.30

Illinois and Ohio both have large num- bers of rail equipment manufacturers. Il- linois has 23 facilities that manufacture or assemble passenger and transit rail systems and components, while Ohio has 13.31 If demand for passenger rail equipment increases, Midwestern manufacturers would likely expand production beyond the freight equipment they currently make. In December 2009, Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood announced that 30 firms had committed to expanding their operations in the United States if they receive con- tracts for high-speed rail projects funded under the American Reinvestment and Re- covery Act. Among those firms are Ohio- based Columbus Steel, Missouri-based American Railcar Industries, and other Midwestern firms.32 Yet, many firms will be reluctant to build plants in the United States without evidence of a sustained com- mitment to high-speed rail. Streetcar manufacturing illustrates how domestic markets can support local busi- nesses. In recent years, several American cities, including Seattle, Washington, and Portland, Oregon, have implemented modern streetcar systems, using streetcars manufactured abroad. In fact, no streetcars had been made in America since 1952.33 However, sensing the presence of a grow- ing market, an American firm, Oregon Iron Works, formed a streetcar subsidiary and has won contracts to produce streetcars for Portland and Tucson, with 70 percent of the components to be made in the United States and components coming from 20 U.S. states.34 Establishing a passenger rail manu- facturing industry in the Midwest could restore some of the manufacturing jobs that the region has lost. If Midwestern manufacturing is to achieve a sustained employment recovery, manufacturers will need to begin selling to new markets, and passenger rail can be just such a market, requiring a variety of skilled workers. The production of complex products like loco- motives and passenger train cars involves not only the manufacturing of numerous components, but also maintenance, testing and other services. Beyond the employees of the rolling stock companies themselves, jobs in other industries are supported by the railroad manufacturing industry. In 2006, the American rolling stock manufacturing industry, beyond employing more than tens of thousands of people, paid out close to $7 billion to purchase parts and equip- ment.35 A revived passenger rail industry in the Midwest would need to purchase glass, seats, and other components from other firms, creating a new outlet and source of revenue for other industries. A high-speed rail system could create hundreds of thousands of jobs. Building a Midwestern rail system according to a plan articulated by the U.S. Department of Transportation—which calls for 2,250 miles of track in the Midwest—would create close to 58,000 permanent jobs and approximately 15,200 construction jobs during a 10-year development phase. The overall boost to the economy is estimated at $23 billion.36 Building this better passenger rail network would create more jobs than if the same amount of money were spent on highway construction.37

Ext – Solvency – National Vision/Projects Key

National projects are key – small projects can’t create the passenger demand needed to ease congestion

BAF Ed Fund, bipartisan coalition of elected officials focused on US investment in infrastructure, 2011 [Building America’s Future Educational Fund, “Building America’s Future – Falling Apart and Falling Behind,” Transportation Infrastructure Report, Accessed 6/9/12] SM

High-speed is not an area in which small pet projects can serve as models that will invite larger commitments in the future; instead, smaller projects are less likely to attract ridership and recoup their investments. Throwing smaller amounts of money at slower and smaller high-speed rail projects that are unlikely to succeed is setting ourselves up for failure. For instance, in the long run, a high-speed link connecting Chicago to cities like Minneapolis and Cincinnati could be a boon for businesses in multiple states. One hundred million people live within 500 miles of Chicago, creating a major hubs, and a population density greater than most of Europe. Amtrak trains in and out of New York City already operate at capacity. At 13 million riders a year, ridership already exceeds the threshold that studies have determined necessary to economically justify an investment in building high-speed rail.36 The route from Los Angeles to San Fran- cisco—currently the second most popular airplane travel route in the nation—also calls out for a high-speed rail line. Between December 2008 and November 2009, 2.8 million passengers flew between LA and San Francisco; in the same period, one out of every four flights from LA to SF was late, with an average delay of one hour, making it one of the most delay-prone routes in the nation.37 As in New York City, there are nearly 200 daily flights between LA area airports and the San Francisco Bay area, containing a ready-made ridership that could ease congestion at the airports.38

2aC Case – AT Plan Not Economically Self-Sufficient

HIGH SPEED RAIL development is economically self sufficient, it will turn an operating profit at least

Baxandall et al, Ph. D., US PIRG Education Fund, Fall 2010 [Phineas, Tony Dutzik & Jordan Schneider, Frontier Group, Erin Steva, CALPIRG Education Fund, - “A Track Record of Success High-Speed Rail Around the World and Its Promise for America,” – US Public Interest Research Group, Accessed 6/1/12] SM

As the United States moves toward the cre- ation of a high-speed rail network at a time of extreme economic difﬁculty, one worry is that a high-speed rail network would be a ﬁnancial albatross, requiring continuing economic subsidy from taxpayers. The experience of high-speed rail lines around the world has good news and cautionary news for the United States. The cautionary news is that high-speed rail infrastructure rarely “pays for itself” directly, in the sense that fare revenue is sufﬁcient to pay for the initial costs of con- struction. Much like other government infrastructure investments—from high- ways to airports to water systems—the purpose of investment in high-speed rail isn’t to make a proﬁt, but rather to lay the foundation for a vigorous economy and a high quality of life. The good news, however, is that well- designed high-speed rail lines around the world frequently turn an operating proﬁt, meaning that they make enough money in fares to pay for their ongoing operation. In the very best cases, high-speed rail lines have been able to completely pay off the initial cost of construction through fare revenue. And in many cases, proﬁts from high-speed rail operations can subsidize other important, if less proﬁtable, forms of rail service. The experience abroad suggests that the United States can generally expect its high- speed services to pay for ongoing costs of operation, though it may take a few years for each line to achieve its full ridership potential.

2aC HIGH SPEED RAIL Add-On – Global Warming

An undeniable scientific consensus has validated the existence of anthropogenic warming – projected carbon emissions are much higher than predicted and positive feedbacks are increasing at rapid rates

Mann, prof of Meteorology and Geosciences @ Penn State University, director of the Penn State Earth System Science Center, awarded the 2012 Hans Oeschger Medal of the European Geosciences Union, April 12, 2012 [Environment 360 - Michael E., “Besieged by Climate Deniers, A Scientist Decides to Fight Back,” http://e360.yale.edu/feature/climate\_scientist\_michael\_mann\_fights\_back\_against\_skeptics/2516/, Accessed 6/9/12] SM

But scientists who work on climate change are increasingly finding our work questioned by politicians and ideologues who simply don’t like our findings. Too often, politicians start with their conclusion, then work backwards to find the evidence — any evidence, regardless of its quality — to back up their preferred policy positions. And the fossil fuel industry is happy to fund those who attack our work, because our research has pointed to the burning of their products — oil, coal, and natural gas — as the primary drivers of climate change.For more than a decade, I’ve found myself targeted and attacked by political interests who feel threatened by some facts my colleagues and I uncovered about our changing climate. We have received menacing e-mails, including anonymous death threats. I’ve received a package containing an Anthrax-like white powder (the FBI determined that it was a hoax), and someone threw a dead rat on the doorstep of another colleague. As the political conversation around climate change has become more polarized, the attacks have intensified.Now, however, my colleagues and I are fighting back, a task that is made easier because the findings that have made us the targets of climate change deniers have only been further validated as CO2 levels continue to rise and the world continues to warm. This is also true when it comes to the research behind the so-called “hockey stick” graph, which is what first prompted attacks on me and my colleagues.That graph, [unveiled in a 1998 paper](http://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=1&ved=0CCsQFjAA&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.meteo.psu.edu%2F%7Emann%2Fshared%2Farticles%2Fmbh98.pdf&ei=_N-GT4qJL6Tk0QGE-427Bw&usg=AFQjCNGqVar8ZeF-MK9P0m5_55hBR4N_VA&sig2=IMfg70L9mZvKnncNtKsJ3g" \t "_blank), showed global temperatures level or decreasing for 1,000 years (the shaft of the stick) and then spiking upward in the past century (the upturned blade.) Those rapidly rising temperatures tracked increases in atmospheric levels of carbon dioxide, which coincided with the world’s growing use of fossil fuels.For better and worse, our graph became an icon of climate change because it was relatively easy to understand. That made it a threat to opponents of dealing with global warming, who invested significant time and resources attacking our research. At first, my colleagues and I responded as we would to any scientific question. We evaluated the claims about our data and methods and responded in the scientific literature. But instead of questioning our claims in good faith, our critics approached the hockey stick like a politician approaches a piece of legislation he or she doesn’t like. Their goal was to dismantle our findings, regardless of the facts. By 2005, U.S. Rep. Joe Barton (R-Texas), one of the biggest recipients of fossil fuel funding in the House of Representatives, sent my colleagues and me letters demanding that we open our professional and personal lives to an investigation from his committee.These attacks obscure the bigger picture. Climate science is like a vast puzzle. Individual papers like ours are a single piece of that puzzle. Scientists are still filling in pieces the puzzle, but we can see a relatively complete picture of our climate that tells us the Earth is warming, human activity is the cause, and that we are locking in substantial rises in sea level, increasingly intense heat waves and floods, and threats to global fresh water and food resources as we continue to burn fossil fuels.But politicians and ideologues try to make climate science out to be a house of cards. Remove one card and the whole thing falls down. The hockey stick papers, they decided, must be one of those cards and their response was to attack our research and challenge our integrity. I call it the “Serengeti strategy,” in which predators look for what they perceive as the most vulnerable animals in a herd.In 2005, U.S. Rep. Sherwood Boehlert (R-New York) had the courage to stand up to Joe Barton. Boehlert asked the National Academy of Sciences — an institution created by Abraham Lincoln to advise the government on scientific matters — to evaluate the “hockey stick” and related studies. The academy found our conclusions to be valid and appropriately understood them to be one piece of the puzzle. In fact, dozens of “hockey stick” studies using different data and methods have verified and extended our original findings in the past several years.Barton took a different tack. He commissioned a statistician from George Mason University to produce a report for his committee to misrepresent our research. When the National Academy of Sciences issued its report, which validated our findings, fossil fuel industry allies in Congress like Sen. James Inhofe (R-Oklahoma) falsely claimed that the report disproved our research. Inhofe has named me and 16 others scientists as people he’d like to investigate if he again gains control of a committee in the Senate. Inhofe has just published a book detailing the “global warming conspiracy” he believes is behind climate science research. As a climate scientist, I can assure everyone that my colleagues and I simply aren’t that organized.Like Barton, Virginia Attorney General Ken Cuccinelli issued a subpoena in 2010 demanding personal correspondence from me and dozens of other scientists from my time at the University of Virginia. Thankfully, groups like the Union of Concerned Scientists, the American Association of University Professors, and several free speech organizations urged the university to fight Cuccinelli’s demands, and the university did. Cuccinelli lost his case before the Virginia Supreme Court last month. While we don’t know how much Cuccinelli’s office spent on this witchhunt, the university spent more than $600,000 in private funds defending scientists’ right to privacy.Inhofe and Cuccinelli both drew their inspiration from an incident in November 2009, when climate scientists had their emails stolen from the University of East Anglia and [misrepresented through a coordinated public relations campaign](http://e360.yale.edu/feature/climategate_anatomy_of_a_public_relations_disaster/2221/) orchestrated by a who’s who of climate denial front groups. Why attack the University of East Anglia? It is one of four major government and academic centers that track global temperatures. Again, the Serengeti strategy at work: no matter that all the data from these four institutions tell us the world is rapidly warming, and that numerous independent investigations later concluded that the scientists whose e-mails had been hacked, including mine, had not engaged in fraud or scientific misconduct.Despite these attacks, reality is catching up to our national conversation about climate change, and it is becoming harder to deny what the science has been telling us. Since the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) reports in 2007, new scientific findings have indicated that global warming is generally worse than we thought. Carbon emissions are higher than the IPCC projected, Arctic sea ice is melting at a faster-than-expected clip, and observed and projected sea levels are increasing. At the same time, advances in climate science have more definitively linked climate change to an increasing likelihood of many types of extreme weather events.

2aC HIGH SPEED RAIL Add-On – Global Warming

HIGH SPEED RAIL creates massive net reductions in Co2 emissions, offsets emissions from oil based planes and cars

Ridlington & Kerth et al, policy analysts w/ the Frontier Group, environmental think tank in affiliation with the Public Interest Network, Fall 2010 [Wisconsin Public Interest Research Group – Elizabeth & Rob, Brian Imus & Bruce Speight, WISPIRG Foundation “Connecting the Midwest, - How a Faster Passenger Rail Network Could Speed Travel and Boost the Economy,” Accessed 6/1/12] SM

Passenger rail is a cleaner form of trans- portation than car or air travel, emitting less global warming pollution and less health-threatening air pollution. Building a high-speed rail network in the Midwest would attract passengers who otherwise would have taken cars or planes, thereby reducing global warming emissions and cleaning up our air. Modernizing our tracks would also benefit freight trains, taking large trucks off of highways and adding to the environmental and health benefits of investment in rail. Passenger rail already emits less global warming pollution than cars or planes, and these savings will increase as the United States develops a high-speed rail network. A Center for Clean Air Policy (CCAP)/ Center for Neighborhood Technology (CNT) study showed that today, passenger rail travel emits 60 percent less carbon di- oxide per passenger mile then cars and 66 percent less than planes. The faster diesel trains that would likely be used to upgrade current service would emit slightly more emissions, but would still emit much less than cars and planes and would draw more passengers than current passenger rail.52 (See Figure 3.) Electric trains show the most potential for global warming emission reductions, even using today’s carbon-intensive elec- tricity grid. For example, a passenger on an electric train in Germany produces about 93 percent less air pollution than someone traveling by car, and 91 percent less than someone making the same trip by plane.53 The CCAP/CNT study surveyed the technology used on three different popular electric train lines, in France, Ger- many, and Japan, and found that all would produce lower carbon dioxide emissions per passenger-mile than a fast diesel train when powered by the U.S. electric grid. One especially efficient train, used on the German ICE line, would produce about half the emissions of America’s current passenger rail system.54 Electric trains are not only more energy efficient, but they are faster, and could eventually be pow- ered at least partially with emission-free renewable energy. Currently, the Midwest’s electric grid is heavily dependent on coal, which makes electric rail less advantageous here than in many other places around the world, but as renewable electricity is increasingly incorporated into that grid, electric trains will offer greater advantages in terms of pollution reduction. By attracting travelers who otherwise would have taken cars or planes, building a high-speed rail network would be much more effective at reducing global warming emissions than our current passenger rail system. A study undertaken for the Mid- west Regional Rail Initiative found that 5.1 million car trips and 1.3 million airplane trips would be replaced by rail trips every year if the full Midwestern rail system is constructed. Once the system is operating at full capacity, the Center for Clean Air Policy and the Center for Neighborhood Technology estimate that it will reduce carbon dioxide by 188,000 tons of carbon dioxide annually.56 That is equal to the an- nual pollution produced by 33,700 cars.57 Savings could be greater. Improvements to and expansion of intrastate conventional rail networks that benefit other rail and freight operations would further reduce emissions. For example, the Minnesota Department of Transportation, using this broader approach to estimating emissions, calculates an annual greenhouse gas reduc- tion of between 318,000 and 526,000 tons from improvements planned over the next 20 years.58 When tracks are upgraded for better passenger rail service, freight traffic needs are considered as well, allowing freight trains to travel faster, more frequently and with fewer delays. Rail transport is much more fuel-efficient than truck transport for freight—various studies estimate that train transport is three to nine times as efficient as truck transport for the same amount of freight.59 The resulting fuel sav- ings add to the emissions reductions from improving passenger rail. Already, federal funding allocated through the Recovery Act will allow for the construction of a new railroad bridge for westbound trains out of Chicago, adding capacity at a criti- cal chokepoint in the city’s rail network.60 Chicago is the nation’s largest freight rail hub—40 percent of the nation’s freight passes through Chicago at some point in its voyage—but also the nation’s most congested rail hub, with freight trains sometimes requiring two days to pass through the city.61 Relieving that extreme congestion with track improvements will offer serious environmental and economic benefits.

2aC HIGH SPEED RAIL Add-On – Global Warming

****Unabated climate change collapses civilization****

**Figueres,** Executive Secretary of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, February 15, 20**11**

[Christiana, Security Address to the Congress of Deputies of Spain at the Centro Superior de Estudios de la Defensa Nacional in Madrid,” http://climateprogress.org/2011/02/15/food-crisis-climate-change-figueres/, Accessed 6/12/11] SM

In its context, it is alarming to admit that if the community of nations is unable to fully stabilize climate change, it will threaten where we can live, where and how we grow food and where we can find water. In other words, it will threaten the basic foundation - the very stability on which humanity has built its existence. Let us look at some factors: 1. Reduced water supply and growing demand will in some places lead to increasing competition among different sectors of society, different communities and different countries. Already, one-third of all people in Africa live in drought- prone regions. The IPCC estimates that by 2050, up to 600 million Africans will be at risk of water stress. 2. On a global level, increasingly unpredictable weather patterns will lead to falling agricultural production and higher food prices, leading to food insecurity. In Africa, crop yields could decline by as much as 50% by 2020. Recent experiences around the world clearly show how such situations can cause political instability and undermine the performance of already fragile states. 3. Changes in sea-level, more frequent and more severe natural disasters and water shortages have the potential to cause large-scale, destabilizing population movements. Migration, especially within a country, is not inherently problematic and is quite common in Africa. But what we have seen historically in terms of international migration will be tiny compared to the migration brought about by the magnitude of future pressures on vulnerable populations. All these factors taken together mean that climate change, especially if left unabated, threatens to increase poverty and overwhelm the capacity of governments to meet the basic needs of their people, which could well contribute to the emergence, spread and longevity of conflict. As you certainly know better than me, these are the reasons why militaries around the world are planning for climate change, adjusting their budgets, their strategies and their priorities. This is understandable, but the very scale of the security problem in a world that begins to panic over the advanced impacts of climate change could overwhelm any single country’s ability to defend against it, let alone pay the cost to do so.

2aC – States CP

1. Permutation do both – cooperation on implementation is vital

Ridlington & Kerth et al, policy analysts w/ the Frontier Group, environmental think tank in affiliation with the Public Interest Network, Fall 2010 [Wisconsin Public Interest Research Group – Elizabeth & Rob, Brian Imus & Bruce Speight, WISPIRG Foundation “Connecting the Midwest, - How a Faster Passenger Rail Network Could Speed Travel and Boost the Economy,” Accessed 6/1/12] SM

The successful development of a Mid- western regional rail system will re- quire participation by multiple levels of government. In particular, states and the federal government will each have a significant role in the process. As with the highway system, federal funding will be required to make a high-speed rail network possible. Beyond providing these funds, the federal government will need to hold their recipients accountable, and tie the Midwest’s actions into a broader national strategy for rail. States, meanwhile, will have primary responsibility for develop- ing and implementing the plan for the rail system.

2. Massive Solvency Deficits

A. Funding - only federal funding is sufficient, states simply don’t have the economic capacity to fund high-speed rail over the long term – that’s Rindlington and Kerth

B. National Standards – eligibility standards set by the federal government is key to create economies of scale - that’s Rindlington and Kerth

3. National projects are key – small projects can’t create the passenger demand needed to ease congestion

BAF Ed Fund, bipartisan coalition of elected officials focused on US investment in infrastructure, 2011 [Building America’s Future Educational Fund, “Building America’s Future – Falling Apart and Falling Behind,” Transportation Infrastructure Report, Accessed 6/1/12] SM

High-speed is not an area in which small pet projects can serve as models that will invite larger commitments in the future; instead, smaller projects are less likely to attract ridership and recoup their investments. Throwing smaller amounts of money at slower and smaller high-speed rail projects that are unlikely to succeed is setting ourselves up for failure. For instance, in the long run, a high-speed link connecting Chicago to cities like Minneapolis and Cincinnati could be a boon for businesses in multiple states. One hundred million people live within 500 miles of Chicago, creating a major hubs, and a population density greater than most of Europe. Amtrak trains in and out of New York City already operate at capacity. At 13 million riders a year, ridership already exceeds the threshold that studies have determined necessary to economically justify an investment in building high-speed rail.36 The route from Los Angeles to San Fran- cisco—currently the second most popular airplane travel route in the nation—also calls out for a high-speed rail line. Between December 2008 and November 2009, 2.8 million passengers flew between LA and San Francisco; in the same period, one out of every four flights from LA to SF was late, with an average delay of one hour, making it one of the most delay-prone routes in the nation.37 As in New York City, there are nearly 200 daily flights between LA area airports and the San Francisco Bay area, containing a ready-made ridership that could ease congestion at the airports.38

2aC – States CP

**4. States will say no – Ohio & Wisconsin prove states won’t accept the financial liability of footing the bill**

**Utt**, Ph. D. & Herbert and Joyce Morgan Senior Research Fellow in the Thomas A. Roe Institute for Economic Policy Studies at The Heritage Foundation, February 11, 2011 [The Heritage Foundation - Ronald, “Time to End Obama’s Costly High Speed Rail Program,” %20Topic/HSR%20Neg/Time%20to%20End%20the%20Costly%20High%20Speed%20Rail%20Program.webarchive, Accessed 6/8/12] SM

At the same time, as citizens of states receiving the money began to inspect the Obama plan’s cost estimates, travel benefits, and long-term subsidy obligations more closely, support for HSR began to wane, and gubernatorial candidates in Wisconsin, Ohio, and Florida who opposed or were skeptical about HSR won their elections. The new governors of Wisconsin and Ohio have since canceled their states’ programs, and the Florida program, one of only two real HSR programs funded by the FRA, is under review by the new governor. The California program, the only other real HSR proposal, will likely not be built because of its exceptionally high cost and California’s long-term, systemic fiscal crisis.Despite Congress’s commitment of significant funding to the program and the President’s giddy excitement about an America transformed by an inefficient, inconvenient, and wildly expensive mode of travel, the President’s HSR program is in a state of collapse. The new Congress should put an end to what little life remains in this futile and costly exercise and use any recovered funds for deficit reduction.Ohio and Wisconsin Reject the Federal Funds**.** For inexplicable reasons, in January 2010, the FRA awarded $4.5 billion (56 percent) of the HSR funds to existing freight railroads for track improvements that would benefit them and existing and prospective slow-speed Amtrak service that shares the same tracks under contract with the freight railroads that own the tracks on which Amtrak operates. The FRA awarded just $3.5 billion (44 percent) to only two genuine HSR projects, those in California and Florida.[[5]](http://www.heritage.org/research/reports/2011/02/time-to-end-obamas-costly-high-speed-rail-program#_ftn5) Not surprisingly, HSR advocates were disappointed and expressed their concerns accordingly.Because all of these projects—slow-speed and high-speed—would require substantial state matching funds and perpetual state operating subsidies (since no passenger rail system in the U.S. and only a handful abroad earn a profit or break even), any state accepting the money would also be accepting a significant, long-term financial liability at a time when most states are hard-pressed to meet the core responsibilities of education, law enforcement, and public health.Consequently, supporting or opposing the President’s rail plan became an issue in several gubernatorial races, particularly in Wisconsin, Ohio, and Florida, where the winning candidates either opposed or questioned the value of the federal rail grant. In Wisconsin, incoming Governor Scott Walker (R) opposed the plan, and outgoing Governor James Doyle (D) suspended the project in response to the voters’ decision.In Ohio, gubernatorial candidate John Kasich (R) campaigned against accepting the $450 million HSR grant to provide passenger service between Cleveland, Columbus, Dayton, and Cincinnati, and Governor Kasich canceled the project shortly after he assumed office. A September 2009 study of the Ohio project’s viability concluded that the average speed of the service would not exceed 39 miles per hour when the stops were included and that its cost would be closer to $581 million.In response to the threatened rejection, U.S. Secretary of Transportation Ray LaHood argued, “If you build it they will come,” and “People like to ride trains.… You don’t build these trains to travel faster, although sometimes you do.”[[6]](http://www.heritage.org/research/reports/2011/02/time-to-end-obamas-costly-high-speed-rail-program#_ftn6) Apparently, Ohio voters were unmoved by Secretary LaHood’s rationalizations and elected Kasich governor.The FRA has since diverted the $810 million to extend Amtrak’s Hiawatha line from Milwaukee to Madison and the $450 million to be spent in Ohio to other HSR projects, primarily in California and Florida.

2aC – States CP

5. Turn - state action devotes funds away from meaningful HRS projects

BAF Ed Fund, bipartisan coalition of elected officials focused on US investment in infrastructure, 2011 [Building America’s Future Educational Fund, “Building America’s Future – Falling Apart and Falling Behind,” Transportation Infrastructure Report, Accessed 6/1/12] SM

Comparatively speaking, the U.S. is practi- cally sitting the high-speed rail competition out. The Obama Administration has an- nounced a vision of a nation-wide high- speed rail network. But $10 billion in initial funding pales in comparison with our competitors’ investments. And spreading that $10 billion around 36 states runs the risk of achieving nothing at all. As we watch states change course after the 2010 election and decline some of the high-speed rail funds they had been awarded, we must concede that President Obama is not all right on this issue, and the new governors are not all wrong. Some states are planning trains that will not run at truly high speeds—in which case they won’t create genuinely attractive travel options to ease our air and road congestion problems. Some states are planning to improve existing passenger lines, rather than build new dedicated high-speed lines—which means the passenger trains will still have to share the tracks with freight and be accordingly subjected to delays. And some states are planning projects that simply don’t make economic sense—or at least should not be considered a top national priority.

6. Turn – without a reorientation of federal funds towards HIGH SPEED RAIL , funds will continue to go to the current high way system – swamps any overall benefit from state action

BAF Ed Fund, bipartisan coalition of elected officials focused on US investment in infrastructure, 2011 [Building America’s Future Educational Fund, “Building America’s Future – Falling Apart and Falling Behind,” Transportation Infrastructure Report, Accessed 6/1/12] SM

In stark contrast to our most agile and aggressive foreign competitors, the U.S. stands increasingly alone in our failure to reorient our transportation spending according to a new forward-looking vision that could build a transportation network fit for a 21st-century economy. Without a similarly strategic plan of attack to create a state-of-the-art transportation network, the U.S. will be left far behind. This striking lack of vision is a debilitating problem. Instead of taking a comprehensive look at the current weaknesses in our national network, we are largely following the same policy goals and guidelines announced when Eisenhower was president. As a result, federal transportation policy is skewed toward maintaining and expanding the Interstate Highway System. We’ve put relatively little emphasis on targeting our most economically strategic trade corridors or building new transport systems to meet our 21st-century economic needs. Government transportation spending, at all levels of government, is overwhelmingly directed toward roads. Since 1956, the largest portion of public funding for transpor- tation infrastructure was dedicated to building and maintaining highways.1 Although a small portion (15%) of the federal gas tax is dedicated to a fund for mass transit, the vast majority of federal gas tax revenue is spent on highways. The same is true for state gas taxes: 30 states are actually constitutionally or statutorily required to spend 100% of their gas tax revenues on roads. The disproportionate channeling of transportation dollars toward highways has encouraged more and more construction of roads, even as the demand rises for other forms of transportation. The last multi-year infrastructure law passed by Congress, the 2005 Safe Accountable Flexible Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (known as SAFETEA-LU), authorized $286.4 billion of federal spending on surface transportation projects through 2009—nearly 70% of which has been spent on highways, and only 1% of which has been directed to ports, national freight gateways, and trade corridors. After that, the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA) provided an additional $48 billion in federal stimulus dollars for transportation projects, most of which also went to roads. There is no question that America must continue to provide adequate funding to ensure the efficiency and safety of our highways, roads, and bridges since they will always remain an important component of our transportation network. But despite the emphasis on our road system, we are not meeting the challenge. Congestion still predominates, especially in our metro areas, and the system has serious safety challeng- es. For example, America currently has more than 69,000 structurally deficient bridges, more than 11% of all the bridges in our country.2 Meanwhile, underinvestment in airports, in commuter and freight rail, and in ports costs us jobs, economic growth, and access to overseas markets. Compared to the signifi- cant sums dedicated to roads, government spending on other modes of transportation is relatively meager. The U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) spends about $10.2 billion a year on public transit, or less than a quarter of what it spends on highways. The federal government contributes even less to Amtrak’s operation costs. In contrast to its highway funding programs, USDOT encourages greater state contribu- tions to transit projects. Since the majority of states are constitutionally or statutorily prohibited from using state gas taxes for public transit projects, USDOT’s funding requirements are a tough imposition on states. Unwilling or unable to match federal contributions with general revenue funds, states may be more inclined to seek funding for more road projects than for new transit projects.

2aC CP – International Actor – China

1. Permutation do both

2. Can’t Solve

A. Sustainable federal funding over the long term is key not an international one-time cash loan

B. US signal is key to maintain competitiveness

3. No Solvency - US politicians and labor unions will circumvent Chinese action

Bradsher, Hong Kong bureau chief of The New York Times, covering Asian business, economic, political and science news, April 7, 2010 [New York Times – Keith, “China is Eager to Bring High Speed Rail to the US,” Transportation%20Topic/HSR%20Neg/China%20Offers%20High%20Speed%20Rail%20to%20California%20-%20NYTimes.com.webarchive, Accessed 6/9/12] SM

Even if an agreement is reached for China to build and help bankroll a high-speed rail system in California, considerable obstacles would remain.China’s rail ministry would face independent labor unions and democratically elected politicians, neither of which it has to deal with at home. The United States also has labor and [immigration](http://topics.nytimes.com/top/reference/timestopics/subjects/i/immigration_and_refugees/index.html?inline=nyt-classifier) laws stricter than those in China.In a nearly two-hour interview at the rail ministry’s monolithic headquarters here, Mr. Zheng said repeatedly that any Chinese bid would comply with all American laws and regulations.China’s rail ministry has an international reputation for speed and low costs, and is opening 1,200 miles of high-speed rail routes this year alone. China is moving rapidly to connect almost all of its own provincial capitals with bullet trains.But while the ministry has brought costs down through enormous economies of scale, “buy American” pressures could make it hard for China to export the necessary equipment to the United States.

High Speed Rail Negative Blocks 1nC - HIGH SPEED RAIL Solvency Frontline

1. Federal Railroad Administration proves HIGH SPEED RAIL will fail – no source of funds and demand will be miniscule

O’Toole, Senior Fellow w/ the Cato Institute, August 2009 [Texas Public Policy Foundation, non-partisan research institute - Randal, “The High Cost of High-Speed Rail,” – Center for Economic Freedom, Accessed 6/8/12] SM

In February 2009, President Obama asked Congress to include $8 billion for high-speed trains in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. High- speed rail, he said, would be his “signature issue” in the stimulus program.1 Later that month, Obama’s 2010 budget proposed to spend an additional $1 billion per year for five years on high-speed rail.2 In April, Obama presented his national high-speed rail vision to the public. Under the plan, about 8,500 route-miles of high-speed trains would connect key cities in 33 states along the eastern and Gulf Coast seaboards, in the Midwest, Texas-Oklahoma-Arkan- sas, California, and the Pacific Northwest.3 In June, the Federal Railroad Administration published its guidelines for state applications for a share of the stimulus funds for local rail projects.4 The White House claims the high-speed rail plan “mir- rors that of President Eisenhower, the father of the Interstate Highway System, which revolutionized the way Americans traveled.”5 Just as Eisenhower bor- rowed his 40,000-mile interstate highway plan from an existing proposal developed years before by the Bureau of Public Roads, Obama’s 8,500 mile high- speed rail network was identical to one proposed by the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) in 2001.6 But there are four crucial differences between in- terstate highways and high-speed rail. First, the Bu- reau of Public Roads gave President Eisenhower a reasonable estimate of how much the interstates would cost. But the FRA has not offered anyone an estimate of how much its high-speed rail network will cost. Second, the Bureau of Public Roads had a plan for paying for interstate highways: through gas taxes and other highway user fees. In fact, the entire sys- tem was built on a pay-as-you-go basis out of such user fees; not a single dollar of general taxpayer money was spent on the roads. In contrast, the FRA has no financial plan for high-speed rail; no source of funds; and no expectation that passenger fares will cover all of the operating costs much less any of the capital costs. The third key difference is that the interstates truly did revolutionize American travel, while high-speed rail will never be more than a tiny, but expensive, part of the American transportation network. In 2007, the average American traveled 4,000 miles—more than 20 percent of all passenger travel—and shipped 2,000 ton-miles of freight over the interstates.7

Finally, since interstate highways serve all major cities in all 50 states, it is likely that the majority of Ameri- cans travel over an interstate at least once if not sev- eral times a week. In contrast, high-speed trains will mainly be used by a relatively wealthy elite. By comparison, the most optimistic analysis proj- ects that, if the FRA high-speed rail network is com- pletely built by 2025, the average American will ride this system just 58 miles per year—about 1/70th as much as the Interstate Highway System.8 That is hardly revolutionary. Moreover, considering the pre- mium fares to ride high-speed trains and the fact that trains will mainly serve downtown areas, most of that use would be by the wealthy and by bankers, lawyers, government workers, and other downtown employees whose employers pay the fare, while all other taxpayers would share the cost. The FRA is not proposing to build 200-mph bullet trains throughout the U.S. Instead, in most places it is proposing to upgrade existing freight lines to allow passenger trains to run as fast as 110 mph— which means average speeds of only 55-75 mph. This would actually be slower than driving for any- one whose origin and destination are not both right next to a train station. Yet even true high-speed trains have not been par- ticularly successful in France or Japan. While the trains may be enjoyed by tourists who do not want to rent a car, the average residents of France and Ja- pan ride them less than 400 miles per year—barely 2 percent as much as the average American travels each year. The expenditure of tens and even hun- dreds of billions of dollars on high-speed rail has not relieved traffic congestion on any highways or pre- vented the continuing decline of rail’s importance as a mode of passenger transportation.

1nC - HIGH SPEED RAIL Solvency Frontline

2. Turn – HIGH SPEED RAIL trades off with freight usage, causes a spike in truck usage

O’Toole, Senior Fellow w/ the Cato Institute, August 2009 [Texas Public Policy Foundation, non-partisan research institute - Randal, “The High Cost of High-Speed Rail,” – Center for Economic Freedom, Accessed 6/8/12] SM

On the other hand, in both Europe and Japan, the emphasis on using rails for moving passengers has had a profound effect on the movement of freight. While a little more than a quarter of American freight goes on the highway and well over a third goes by rail, nearly three-fourths of European freight goes on the road and just one-sixth goes by rail (table 4). Moreover, rail’s share of freight movement is declin- ing in Europe—it was 22 percent in 1980—while it increased in the United States from 27 percent in 1980 to 40 percent in 2006.61 Rail’s poor performance at carrying freight in both Ja- pan and Europe suggests that Obama’s hope of get- ting both people and freight off the highways and onto trains may be a pipedream; a country or region can apparently use its rail system for passengers or freight, but not both. The fact that American freight railroads are profitable while European passenger lines are not suggests that freight, not passenger, is the highest and best use of a modern railroad in most places. Spending tens of billions of dollars per year on passenger rail might get a small percentage of cars off the road—but one possible consequence is to greatly increase the number of trucks on the road.

3. Studies predict HIGH SPEED RAIL can’t effectively work across the US, ridership won’t be sustainable

O’Toole, Senior Fellow w/ the Cato Institute, October 31, 2008 [The Cato Institute - Randal, “High-Speed Rail – The Wrong Road for America,” – Policy Analysis no. 625, http://www.cato.org/publications/policy-analysis/highspeed-rail-wrong-road-america, Accessed 6/8/12] SM

Close scrutiny of these plans reveals that they do not live up to the hype. As attractive as 110-to 220-mile-per-hour trains might sound, even the most optimistic forecasts predict they will take few cars off the road. At best, they will replace for profit private commuter airlines with heavily subsidized public rail systems that are likely to require continued subsidies far into the future. Nor are high-speed rail lines particularly environmentally friendly. Planners have predicted that a proposed line in Florida would use more energy and emit more of some pollutants than all of the cars it would take off the road. California planners forecast that high-speed rail would reduce pollutionand greenhouse gas emissions by a mere 0.7 to 1.5 percent—but only if ridership reached the high end of projected levels. Lower ridership would nullify energy savings and pollution reductions. These assessments are confirmed by the actual experience of high-speed rail lines in Japan and Europe. Since Japan introduced high-speed bullet trains, passenger rail has lost more than half its market share to the automobile. Since Italy, France, and other European countries opened their high-speed rail lines, rail's market share in Europe has dwindled from 8.2 to 5.8 percent of travel. If high-speed rail doesn't work in Japan and Europe, how can it work in the United States? As megaprojects—the California high-speed rail is projected to cost $33 to $37 billion—high-speed rail plans pose serious risks for taxpayers. Costs of recent rail projects in Denver and Seattle are running 60 to 100 percent above projections. Once construction begins, politicians will feel obligated to throw good taxpayers' money after bad. Once projects are completed , most plans call for them to be turned over to private companies that will keep any operational profits,while taxpayers will remain vulnerable if the trains lose money.

1nC - HIGH SPEED RAIL Solvency Frontline

4. The source of energy for high-speed rail poses critical logistical problems

Preston, Professor of Rail Transport @ School of Civil Engineering & Environment, University Southampton, Director of Transportation Research Group, October 2009 [John, “The Case for High Speed Rail: A Review of Recent Evidence,” Royal Automobile Club Foundation for Motoring – Report # 09128, Accessed 6/8/12]

There are also issues about the need to consider alternative uses of any proposed HSR alignment, either for alternative technology such as Maglev, or for conventional rail (either passenger and freight) that have so far only been examined by a fairly crude form of multi-criteria analysis. A West Coast HSR may pass a given BCR threshold but there is a possible concern that alternative transport investments could give better returns. Given that a London to Scotland HSR line will attract a lot of air traffic, there will be a marked reduction in domestic flights. An important issue will be the second round benefits of the freed up capacity and how that might be utilised. At its extreme, this boils down to whether serving Heathrow by HSR may act a substitute for a third runway. There is the related question of whether improved links to HS1 could reduce short haul flights from regional airports such as Birmingham to the near continent. The big unknown at this stage is what will be the precise route taken and whether there is any scope for the rights of way established to be multi-modal or multi- functional (for example also providing for the super grid or for water supply). A particular issue is the location of stations. If the exclusive model is to be pursued these would probably need to be located at edge of town locations. In such cases, connections with the classic rail network might be problematic and access/egress by car would be greater than it might otherwise be, with knock-on environmental impacts. It will be important to investigate mixed exploitation models that permit the use of existing central city stations and for multi-modal links at these stations to be improved. Work to date on HSR has been largely uni-modal, for understandable reasons, but a more multi-modal approach will be required to ensure that HSR is the most appropriate transport intervention. It is hoped that the on-going HS2 study will help resolve some of these issues.

Ext 1nC # 3 – Solvency frontline - No Ridership

Japan and France act as a key test case for the US – high-speed rail empirically fails to attract enough consumers

O’Toole, Senior Fellow w/ the Cato Institute, August 2009 [Texas Public Policy Foundation, non-partisan research institute - Randal, “The High Cost of High-Speed Rail,” – Center for Economic Freedom, Accessed 6/8/12] SM

Though France has Europe’s best-developed high- speed rail network, the average resident of France rides high-speed rail less than 400 miles per year, about the same as the average Japanese. The French travel more than the Japanese (or most other Euro- peans), so high-speed rail carries less than 4 percent of French passenger travel.55 Just as in Japan, high-speed rail has not perceptibly slowed the growth of auto driving in Europe. In 1980, when only a few high-speed rail lines were in operation, intercity rail accounted for 8.2 percent of passenger travel in the EU-15. By 2000, it had declined to 6.3 per- cent, and has continued to decline since then. Mean- while, the share of European travel using automobiles increased from 76.4 percent to 78.3 percent and the share flying increased from 2.5 to 5.8 percent.56 Rail’s declining importance in Europe has come about despite onerous taxes on driving and huge subsidies to rail transportation. Much of the reve- nue from those taxes is effectively used to subsidize rail. “Rail is heavily subsidized,” says French econo- mist Rémy Prud’Homme, adding that taxpayers “pay about half the total cost of providing the service.” Prud’Homme estimates that rail service in the EU-15 receives about 68 billion euros—or about $100 bil- lion—of subsidies each year.57 Nor has the introduction of new high-speed rail service helped relieve highway congestion. “Not a single high-speed track built to date has had any perceptible impact on the road traffic carried by par- allel motorways,” says Ari Vatanen, a member of the European Parliament.58 However, the introduction of subsidized high-speed rail has caused some for- profit airlines to end service on parallel routes, which should hardly be a cause for joy.59 Europe’s passenger travel mix is similar to that of the United States (table 3). The big difference is that Eu- ropean intercity rail carries a 5.8 percent share of the travel market compared with Amtrak’s 0.1 percent. But it is not even clear that this is due to the mas- sive subsidies Europe is pouring into high-speed rail, since rail’s percentage is steadily declining despite those subsidies. Instead, it may be that Europe’s low- er incomes and high taxes on autos and fuel has sim- ply slowed the growth of driving. European planners predict that rail and bus’s combined share will con- tinue to decline between now and 2030.60

1nC - HIGH SPEED RAIL Economy Advantage Frontline

1. Turn - true HIGH SPEED RAIL requires a massive increase in construction – astronomical costs will ensue

O’Toole, Senior Fellow w/ the Cato Institute, August 2009 [Texas Public Policy Foundation, non-partisan research institute - Randal, “The High Cost of High-Speed Rail,” – Center for Economic Freedom, Accessed 6/8/12] SM

High-speed train aficionados do not consider 110-mph trains to be true high-speed rail. The Cali- fornia legislature defined high-speed rail as lines with a top speed of greater than 125 mph. “The reason for the 125 miles per hour threshold,” says the California Senate Transportation Committee, “is that existing passenger rail equipment can operate at this speed if the appropriate signaling technology is installed and the right-of-way meets a variety of design and safety standards.”15 For safety reasons, passenger trains running faster than 110 mph are incompatible with slower freight trains. True high-speed rail cars tend to be very light- weight, and would be easily crushed in a collision with loaded freight cars.16 Such trains could not safe- ly operate on the same tracks as freight trains. This means any corridors calling for higher speeds require tracks dedicated to passenger trains, which usually means new construction. True high-speed rail is therefore far more expensive than 110-mph moderate-speed rail. Various states have developed cost estimates for in- dividual corridors. In 2004, the Midwest High-Speed Rail Initiative estimated that bringing 3,150 miles of Midwest routes up to moderate-speed standards would cost $7.7 billion, or $2.4 million per mile.17 (All of these costs include locomotives, rail cars, and sta- tions as well as new tracks or upgrades to existing tracks.) In 2005, the New York High-Speed Rail Task Force es- timated that upgrading the track in the Empire Cor- ridor between New York City and Buffalo—a small portion of which currently supports 110-mph trains but most of which is limited to 79 mph—to 110-mph standards (with a small portion as fast as 125 mph) would cost $1.8 billion, or $3.9 million per mile.18 New tracks are far more expensive. In 2005, the Flor- ida High-Speed Rail Authority estimated that a new 92-mile line capable of running gas-turbine trains at 125 mph between Tampa and Orlando would cost about $2.05 billion to $2.47 billion, or $22 million to $27 million per mile.19 In 2008, the California High-Speed Rail Authority esti- mated that a 490-mile initial segment from San Fran- cisco to Anaheim would cost $33 billion, or about $67 million a mile.20 At this average rate, planned branches to Sacramento, Riverside, and San Diego would cost another $19 billion. These costs are high- er than Florida’s due to more mountainous terrain, the extra infrastructure required for electric-powered trains, and California’s desire to run trains at 220 mph instead of 125 mph. Even accounting for the current recession, construc- tion costs have grown significantly since some of these estimates were made. In much of the country, construction costs have increased by nearly 50 per- cent since 2004.21 To be conservative, this paper will assume that costs estimated in 2004 have increased by 35 percent and costs estimated in 2005 have in- creased by 25 percent. Based on the estimates for the Midwest corridor, upgrading track to support 110-mph trains will cost $3.5 million per mile. If ap- plied to the Federal Railroad Administration’s entire 8,500-mile system, that would total to nearly $30 billion, or close to four times the amount of money Congress has approved for high-speed rail. However, some places are not satisfied with 110-mph trains. California voters approved a $9 billion down payment on its $33 billion trunk line from San Fran- cisco to Los Angeles, and the state’s rail authority fully expects the federal government to pay half of the to- tal cost. Florida’s 125-mph Orlando-to-Tampa line is only one-quarter of the Miami-Orlando-Tampa route in the FRA plan. Assuming an average cost of $31 million a mile (the midpoint between $22 and $27 adjusted for recent increases in construction costs), this entire line will cost more than $11 billion (table 2, next page). At minimum, then, the FRA plan will cost about $90 billion. About 90 million people file federal income tax forms and pay income taxes each year, so the FRA plan will cost each income tax payer about $1,000.22

1nC - HIGH SPEED RAIL Economy Advantage Frontline

2. Turn - HIGH SPEED RAIL development requires constant maintenance post development – rebuilding costs will snowball – Japan proves

O’Toole, Senior Fellow w/ the Cato Institute, August 2009 [Texas Public Policy Foundation, non-partisan research institute - Randal, “The High Cost of High-Speed Rail,” – Center for Economic Freedom, Accessed 6/8/12] SM

Another hidden cost of rail transportation is that rail lines must be largely and expensively rebuilt about every 30 years. The Federal Transit Administration recently estimated that the nation’s older rail tran- sit systems are suffering from a $50 billion backlog of unfunded maintenance needs.33 Congress tends to fund “ribbons, not brooms”—that is, to fund new projects (over which they can cut ribbons) instead of maintaining existing projects. This means con- struction of moderate- or high-speed rail lines could leave states obligated to fund billions of dollars of re- habilitation costs. What will American taxpayers get for this money? To answer that question, it is important to scrutinize the highly touted high-speed trains in Europe and Japan. In 1964, Japanese National Railways began operating the world’s first high-speed train, the 135-mph Tokai- do Shinkansen, or bullet train, between Tokyo and Osaka. This is also the only high-speed train in the world that has paid for itself, and for good reasons. First, it was built across flat land at a time when Ja- pan’s property values and construction costs were far lower than today. The total cost of the 320-mile line was ¥380 billion, which (adjusting for inflation) is about $17 billion or $53 million per mile.34 More important, the Tokaido line connects three of the world’s largest and densest metropolitan areas: Tokyo, with 21 million people in 1965, 33 million to- day; Osaka, with 13 million in 1965, 17 million today; and Nagoya, with 6 million people in 1965, 9 million today.35 Few other places in the developed world have such concentrations of people located a few hundred miles apart. Furthermore, in the early 1960s, Japan did not have the problem of attracting people out of their auto- mobiles. As of 1960, when Shinkansen construction began, trains provided 77 percent of all passenger travel while autos provided just 5 percent.36 Instead, the problem was keeping people from buying and driving autos—and in this, the Shinkansen failed mis- erably. Between 1965 and 2005, per-capita driving in- creased by more than 900 percent, while per-capita rail travel increased by a meager 19 percent. Although the Tokaido line earned a profit, subse- quent Shinkansen did not. In 1960, the Japanese National Railways was a government-owned corpo- ration that actually made money. But the success of the Tokaido line led politicians in other, less-densely populated parts of Japan to demand that the com-pany build more high-speed trains to their regions. For example, when Kakuei Tanaka (who was later convicted of accepting a bribe) was prime minister, he made sure that a high-speed rail line was built into the prefecture he represented, though the line, says the University of Arizona’s Louis Hayes, “served very few passengers.” 37 High-speed trains “took on a life of their own as the ultimate pork barrel beloved of politicians,” writes an American now living in Japan, “with the result that gigantic new lines continue to expand across the nation regardless of economic need or environmen- tal impact.”38 To date, at least eight other lines have been built, each more expensive and serving fewer people than the last. For example, the 167-mile Joetsu line between Omiya and Niigata—cities of less than half a million people each—cost ¥1.7 trillion, which (adjusting for inflation) is more than $140 million per mile. Even worse was the 73-mile Nagano line between Taka- saki and Nagano, each smaller than 350,000 people. It was built through the mountains at a cost of ¥8.4 trillion, which works out to more than a billion dollars per mile!39 These and other politically driven losses put the Jap- anese National Railways in the red for the first time in its history. JNR responded by raising passenger fares, but this only pushed more people off trains and into automobiles. Despite—or because of—the bullet trains, auto travel surpassed rail travel in 1977. By 1987, expansion of bullet-train service and other below-cost operations had swelled Japanese Na- tional Railways’ debt to more than $350 billion.40 (By comparison, General Motors’ debt shortly before its bankruptcy was $35 billion.41) This led to a financial crisis that significantly contributed to the nation’s economic woes of the last two decades. To under- stand this crisis, it is important to understand Japan’s corporate system, which seemed unbeatable in the 1980s.

1nC - HIGH SPEED RAIL Economy Advantage Frontline

3. HIGH SPEED RAIL will be equivalent to throwing government subsidies into a black hole – crushes the US economy

**Utt**, Ph. D. & Herbert and Joyce Morgan Senior Research Fellow in the Thomas A. Roe Institute for Economic Policy Studies at The Heritage Foundation, February 11, 2011 [The Heritage Foundation - Ronald, “Time to End Obama’s Costly High Speed Rail Program,” %20Topic/HSR%20Neg/Time%20to%20End%20the%20Costly%20High%20Speed%20Rail%20Program.webarchive, Accessed 6/8/12] SM

Advocates for more spending on passenger rail, including HSR, often point to Europe and Japan as role models and aspirational goals for American policy. This Euro-envy manifests itself in the promotional statements of America’s rail hobbyists and the foreign companies that hope to sell billions of dollars of equipment, consulting, project management, and engineering services.For example, in an April 2009 press conference, President Obama played the envy card, arguing, “Now, all of you know this is not some fanciful, pie-in-the-sky vision of the future. It is now. It is happening right now. It has been happening for decades. The problem is that it’s been happening elsewhere, not here.” Obama went on to extol HSR systems in France, Spain, China, and Japan and concluded, “There’s no reason why we can’t do this. This is America. There’s no reason why the future of travel should lie somewhere else beyond our borders.”[[17]](http://www.heritage.org/research/reports/2011/02/time-to-end-obamas-costly-high-speed-rail-program#_ftn17)If one’s knowledge of European travel preferences comes from *Time*, *The New York Review of Books*, and Pink Panther movies, then the President’s statement would seem to ring true. Sadly, the reality is quite different. European and Asian governments have paid staggering sums to subsidize a mode of travel that only a small and shrinking share of their populations uses.[[18]](http://www.heritage.org/research/reports/2011/02/time-to-end-obamas-costly-high-speed-rail-program#_ftn18)In its most recent report on European travel patterns, the European Commission noted that passenger rail’s share of the European market (EU-27) declined from 6.6 percent in 1995 to 6.3 percent in 2008, reaching a low of 5.9 percent in 2004. Market shares for autos and buses also fell over the period, while the airlines’ market share jumped. In effect, Europeans are adopting more American modes of travel, despite massive taxpayer subsidies for rail. They are shifting their travel to unsubsidized, taxpaying airlines, which expanded their market share from 6.5 percent in 1995 to 8.6 percent in 2008. Indeed, by 2008, passenger rail’s share of the transportation market was the lowest of all modes, except travel by sea and motorcycles.[[19]](http://www.heritage.org/research/reports/2011/02/time-to-end-obamas-costly-high-speed-rail-program#_ftn19)Although the total size and scope of European subsidies for passenger rail are not known, a recent report by Amtrak’s Inspector General indicated that they are sizable and likely exceed what the U.S. government pays for highways. One purpose of the review was to address the contention that passenger rail in other countries, especially HSR, operates at a profit (that is, without subsidies).For 1995–2006, the study found that the governments of Germany, France, the United Kingdom, Spain, Denmark, and Austria spent “a combined total of $42 billion annually on their national passenger railroads.”[[20]](http://www.heritage.org/research/reports/2011/02/time-to-end-obamas-costly-high-speed-rail-program#_ftn20) These six countries have a combined population of 269 million, and their expenditure of $42 billion on passenger rail in 2006[[21]](http://www.heritage.org/research/reports/2011/02/time-to-end-obamas-costly-high-speed-rail-program#_ftn21) is roughly proportional to the $54.8 billion that the government of the United States (population of 309 million) spent on all forms of transportation, including highways, rail, aviation, water transport, and mass transit.[[22]](http://www.heritage.org/research/reports/2011/02/time-to-end-obamas-costly-high-speed-rail-program#_ftn22)Data from individual countries reveal the financial catastrophes that the U.S. could confront if it embraces Euro-style passenger rail programs. According to the left-leaning *The Economist*, passenger rail subsidies reached $8.9 billion in 2008– 2009, and the magazine wondered:It is not clear why the public should be heavily subsidizing a mode of transport that accounts for a tiny minority of all travel*:* 8% of the total distance travelled in Britain during 2009, compared with 85% by cars and vans. The relatively few who use railways often are disproportionately well-off: three-fifths of the traffic is concentrated in the wealthy commuting counties of the south-east.[[23]](http://www.heritage.org/research/reports/2011/02/time-to-end-obamas-costly-high-speed-rail-program#_ftn23)Despite these massive subsidies, rail ticket prices are still comparatively high. At present, two people traveling from Heathrow airport to downtown London can hire a limousine that meets them at the baggage claim and takes them directly to their destination for less than the cost of taking the Heathrow Express to Paddington Station and then taking the Tube or a taxi to their final destination.Although the U.K. system is mostly low-speed rail, the nation’s one foray into HSR—the Channel Tunnel Link connecting London to Paris and Brussels—has been a costly experience. The infrastructure cost of connecting London’s St. Pancras station with Folkstone (a distance of 67 miles, including 15 miles of tunnels) at the Channel tunnel entrance totaled ₤6.9 billion ($11 billion), including $8.3 billion in loans and $2.7 billion in grants to the original private contractor that built and operated the line. That contractor has since relinquished its ownership of the line, and the U.K. government expects to sell it for $2.4 billion, for a potential loss of $8.6 billion.[[24]](http://www.heritage.org/research/reports/2011/02/time-to-end-obamas-costly-high-speed-rail-program#_ftn24)Meanwhile the signature Eurostar London–Paris– Brussels service that runs on the line has never exceeded half of what was projected in the project’s feasibility study.

1nC - HIGH SPEED RAIL Economy Advantage Frontline

4. No impact-- **Neofunctionalism prevents another Great depression**

**Wade Dokken, co-founder of WealthVest Marketing, December 13, 2010**

(“Ten Major Differnces between the Great Depression and Today’s Recession,” accessed 4/29/11 http://www.wealthvest.com/blog/wade-dokken/4191/)

The first significant difference between the Great Depression and our Great Recession is that there is a significantly larger amount of neo-functionalism today than there was during the Great Depression. Simply put, there has been a growth of technical economic institutions that have required the growth of political institutions as a result. This need to compensate economic markets with governance is known as the “spill-over” effect.

Brue Bartlett of Forbes elaborated on October 2009,

Policymakers were united in their desire to make sure this didn’t happen if humanly possible. Many postwar institutions such as the World Bank, General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade and International Monetary Fund were created to fix various problems thought to be responsible for the Great Depression. Congress even passed a law, the Employment Act of 1946, which requires the president to do everything in his power to prevent another depression.

These institutions have played a vital role in alleviating the severity of bust cycles. The dollar has always been one of the more stable currencies in modern times, but the European Union and the creation of a common, standard currency for the EU has positively increased the stability of the major currencies. This has prevented the massive hyperinflation experienced in the German and Hungarian currencies that occurred during the global Great Depression. Increased political coordination through international institutions has also increased response time and readiness to handle international economic crises.

**Even if they win they increase hegemony in the short-term, other countries are gaining the ability to block U.S. power, making it politically impossible to advance U.S. hegemony**

Gvosdev, is the former editor of the National Interest, and a frequent foreign policy commentator in both the print and broadcast media. He is currently on the faculty of the U.S. Naval War College*,* 2010

(Nikolas K. World Politics Review“Finding a New Model of American July 13, 2010Leadership,”http://www.worldpoliticsreview.com/articles/6023/finding-a-new-model-of-american-global-leadership) SM

As a result, the United States must play an exceedingly challenging hand in the current environment. The first card in that hand is that it is becoming easier for other countries to block U.S. power or to raise the costs for Washington to act, to the point that, although action might still be feasible on paper, it becomes politically impossible. The net result of these developments, [as Judah Grunstein argues](http://www.worldpoliticsreview.com/trend-lines/5938/anti-access-and-power-projection" \t "_blank) will be to create "political constraints [that] will more likely channel American foreign and defense policy into a more modest period of restraint." As [Ramesh Thakur observed](http://www.usip.org/events/preventing-violent-conflict-principles-policies-and-practice" \t "_blank)a recent conference held at the U.S. Institute of Peace, rising powers like China and India will not be content in a world where they are rule-abiders, rather than agenda-setters. The U.S. is fast losing its ability to impose its vision should other powers actively choose to resist. But even when there is no deliberate pushback, merely a lack of support and compliance, Washington is finding it harder to advance its agenda.

EXT 1nC #1 – Economy Adv Frontline - Costs

HIGH SPEED RAIL simply can’t be net beneficial for the economy, costs overtime will swamp the negligible economic benefits from initial construction

A. Cost-overruns are ensured – benefits of HIGH SPEED RAIL will never overcome operating costs

O’Toole, Senior Fellow w/ the Cato Institute, August 2009 [Texas Public Policy Foundation, non-partisan research institute - Randal, “The High Cost of High-Speed Rail,” – Center for Economic Freedom,Accessed 6/8/12] SM

Cost overruns are almost a certainty with large-scale public works projects, partly because project propo- nents tend to offer initially low cost estimates in or- der to gain public acceptance. Danish planning pro- fessor Bent Flyvbjerg argues that megaproject cost estimates should be increased by the proportion by which similar projects have gone over their originally projected budgets.28 No high-speed rail line has ever been built from scratch in the United States, but his- torically, urban passenger rail projects have gone an average of 40 percent over their projected costs.29 Despite optimistic forecasts by rail proponents, pas- senger fares will rarely if ever cover high-speed oper- ating costs. Amtrak operations currently cost federal and state taxpayers more than $1 billion per year.30 According to the bipartisan Amtrak Reform Coun- cil, Amtrak’s trains between Boston and Washington lost nearly $2.30 per passenger in 2001.31 If trains in the most heavily populated corridor in the United States cannot cover their costs, no other trains will come close. The Amtrak Reform Council also estimated that 110-mph trains between Chicago and Detroit lost $72 per passenger; 110-mph trains between New York and Albany lost $28 per passenger; and 90-mph trains between Los Angeles and San Diego lost $28 per passenger. Outside of the Boston-to-Washing- ton and Philidelphia-to-Harrisburg routes, Amtrak short-distance trains lost an average of $37 per pas- senger.32 Amtrak typically expects the states to cover most of the operating losses in regional corridors.

B. Existing Federal Railroad Administration network only accounts for 33 states

O’Toole, Senior Fellow w/ the Cato Institute, August 2009 [Texas Public Policy Foundation, non-partisan research institute - Randal, “The High Cost of High-Speed Rail,” – Center for Economic Freedom, Accessed 6/8/12] SM

That’s only the beginning. The 8,500-mile system proposed by the FRA has some significant gaps. The Midwest High-Speed Rail Initiative proposed sever- al hundred miles of routes not included in the FRA plan. Other notable absences include proposed lines from Dallas to Houston, Jacksonville to Orlando, and Los Angeles to Las Vegas. Altogether, these repre- sent about 1,750 route miles whose cost, if brought to 110-mph standards, would be $6.1 billion. The costs are not likely to stop there. The 8,500-mile FRA network only reaches 33 states. Arizona, Colo- rado, Nevada, and Tennessee are among the fast- growing states left out of the network, and every excluded state is represented by senators and rep- resentatives who will wonder why their constituents have to pay for rail lines that only serve other states. A particularly large hole in the system can be found in the Rocky Mountains, which are ignored by the FRA plan even though Phoenix and Denver are two of America’s largest urban areas. Although Congress au- thorized the FRA to designate 11 high-speed rail corri- dors, it has identified only 10. The Rocky Mountain Rail Authority, which is funded by the Colorado Depart- ment of Transportation, has proposed an 11th corri- dor consisting of a high-speed line from Albuquerque to Cheyenne and extending west to Grand Junction, Aspen, and Craig, Colorado.23 At 110-mph standards, that adds another $3.3 billion. These additions bring the total to nearly $100 billion. For comparison, the Interstate Highway System cost about $425 billion after adjusting for inflation to to- day’s dollars.24

EXT 1nC #1 – Economy Adv Frontline- Costs

C. California proves states will clamor for more funding to constantly modernize their existing infrastructure, creates an endless cycle of funding and government dependency

O’Toole, Senior Fellow w/ the Cato Institute, August 2009 [Texas Public Policy Foundation, non-partisan research institute - Randal, “The High Cost of High-Speed Rail,” – Center for Economic Freedom, Accessed 6/8/12] SM

More than half of the total cost of the FRA plan is for the California lines, which make up less than 10 per- cent of the route miles. For this reason, the California High-Speed Rail Authority believes it has “every right to think we would receive the lion’s share of the” $8 billion Congress has approved for high-speed rail.25 However, if California does receive a significant share of federal funds, elected officials from other states are likely to demand that the federal government build them true high-speed lines as well. As if to forestall this possibility, Amtrak’s President Jo- seph Boardman told Illinois legislators in May 2009 that a complete network of true high-speed rail lines would be “prohibitively expensive.”26 But people in the Midwest, Texas, and other places are likely to ask, “Why is it prohibitively expensive for us to have true high-speed rail, but not California?” For example, most proposals for Texas, Las Vegas, and Rocky Mountain corridors call for true high-speed rail. Based on estimates in the California plan, build- ing the entire network to true high-speed rail stan- dards would cost between $550 billion and $700 bil- lion.27 Adding service to some or all of the 13 other states not included in the FRA plan will drive the cost even higher. Of course, once high-speed rail is built to trendy cit- ies all over the country, they will want the federal government to help them build streetcars and light- rail lines so high-speed rail travelers won’t have to sully themselves by riding buses or taxis to their fi- nal destinations. Light rail and streetcars are, after all, a part of the administration’s “livability” agenda. This will add hundreds of billions to the cost of the na- tion’s passenger rail system. All politics is local, meaning every member of Con- gress will want a piece of the high-speed rail pie. So initial funding of $8 billion effectively commits the nation to a $99 billion program, which eventually turns into a $700 billion program, whose actual costs eventually exceed $1 trillion. This doesn’t even count cost overruns, operating subsidies, and rail rehabili- tation every 30 or so years. leave states obligated to fund billions of dollars of re- habilitation costs.

1nC - HIGH SPEED RAIL Oil Dependency Advantage Frontline

1. Proponents of HIGH SPEED RAIL suffer from optimism bias – energy savings from rail development fall to zero over time in reality – future innovations within the current transportation sector solves

O’Toole, Senior Fellow w/ the Cato Institute, August 2009 [Texas Public Policy Foundation, non-partisan research institute - Randal, “The High Cost of High-Speed Rail,” – Center for Economic Freedom, Accessed 6/8/12] SM

Such analyses are rarely objective, however. The Cali- fornia High-Speed Rail Authority claims that high- speed rail would save energy and reduce green- house gas emissions.75 But these claims are based on highly optimistic assumptions for rail and pessimistic assumptions for autos and airlines: The Los Angeles-to-San Francisco line would • carry more than more than three times as many August 2009 The High Cost of High-Speed Rail passengers in 2025 as Amtrak now carries in the Boston-to-Washington corridor, even though that corridor serves more people than the Cali- fornia corridor is expected to have in 2025;76 Neither automobiles nor airplanes will become • more energy efficient or cleaner than they are today;77 The authority never mentions the energy and • pollution cost of replacing trains and reconstruct- ing track and electrical facilities every 30 years; The authority calculates the energy cost of build- •ing high-speed rail, but not the greenhouse gas emissions. These assumptions are all examples of what Dan- ish planning professor Bent Flyvbjerg calls “optimism bias.”78 Such bias, says Flyvbjerg, typically afflicts pro- ponents of megaprojects, which is why large public works projects almost inevitably cost more and pro- duce smaller benefits than originally promised. Based on these optimistic assumptions, the author- ity estimates that operational energy savings will re- pay the energy cost of building high-speed rail in 13 years, after which the rail line will save 11.75 trillion British thermal units (BTUs) per year.79 The rail line is also projected to save 7.5 million metric tons of car- bon dioxide emissions per year, or about 1.4 percent of the state’s projected output in 2025.80 Even with these optimistic assumptions, high-speed rail reduces corridor transportation energy consump- tion by only 8.3 percent. This means the operational energy and greenhouse gas savings fall to zero if we assume instead that automobiles and airplanes are, by 2025, just 8.3 percent more energy efficient than they are today. If automakers meet Obama’s fuel-effi- ciency standards, autos will be more than 30 percent more efficient in 2025 than they are today, so high- speed rail will actually be wasting energy.

2. HSR could never be a cost effective mechanism to reduce Co2 emissions – it would only tradeoff with more effective and cost effective technologies at combating energy efficiency

O’Toole, Senior Fellow w/ the Cato Institute, August 2009 [Texas Public Policy Foundation, non-partisan research institute - Randal, “The High Cost of High-Speed Rail,” – Center for Economic Freedom, Accessed 6/8/12] SM

In addition, nearly 1 million pounds of the project- ed annual reduction of CO2 came from the North- east Corridor, which is not part of the FRA plan and so should have been deducted by the FRA in its an- nouncement.89 That means the plan itself is project- ed to save only 2.3 million metric tons per year. In the unlikely event that all of these assumptions turn out to be correct and high-speed rail does save 2.3 million metric tons of CO2 per year, it is still not a cost-effective way of reducing greenhouse gas emis- sions. McKinsey & Company estimates the United States can cut its greenhouse gas emissions in half by 2030 by investing in technologies that cost no more than $50 per metric ton of abated emissions. Many technologies, McKinsey reported, would actu- ally save money because the fuel savings would re- pay the capital investment. Significantly, none of the technologies that McKinsey considered cost-effec- tive had anything to do with urban transit or intercity rail, through several included improvements in auto- mobile designs.90 If the FRA high-speed rail plan costs $90 billion, as estimated in table 2, then the annualized cost will be about $7.2 billion plus operational subsidies.91 This means high-speed rail will cost more than $3,100 per ton of abated greenhouse gas emissions. For every ton abated, more than 60 tons of abatement would be foregone because the money was not invested in programs that could reduce CO2 at a cost of $50 a ton or less. Correcting any of the study’s assump- tions, of course, would significantly reduce CO2 sav- ings and increase the cost per ton of CO2 abated. (For comparison, estimates of the cost of CO2 abated by the California high-speed rail project range from $2,000 to $10,000 per ton.92)

1nC - HIGH SPEED RAIL Oil Dependency Advantage Frontline

3. Turn – rail operates on diesel and savings can’t offset emissions released from construction or energy consumption – rail development won’t save any energy at all

O’Toole, Senior Fellow w/ the Cato Institute, August 2009 [Texas Public Policy Foundation, non-partisan research institute - Randal, “The High Cost of High-Speed Rail,” – Center for Economic Freedom, Accessed 6/8/12] SM

It is unlikely that moderate-speed train operations will save any energy at all. Such trains will mostly be Diesel-powered, and increasing speeds from 79 to 110 mph will significantly increase the energy con- sumption and greenhouse gas emissions of those trains. Saving energy requires that trains acceler- ate slowly and coast into stations rather than brake heavily, but such practices reduce the timesavings offered by higher top speeds. True high-speed trains save energy by using lighter equipment, but the energy cost of higher speeds party offsets the savings from hauling less weight. Any remaining operational savings are not likely to be sufficient to recover the huge amounts of energy consumed and greenhouse gases released during construction of new rail lines.71 After studying high-speed rail proposals in Britain, Professor Roger Kemp of Lancaster University con- cluded that the construction costs dwarf any savings in operations unless the rail lines are used to their full capacity.72 With a round-the-clock average of just one train an hour in each direction, and no more than two trains a hour during the busiest times of day, even Amtrak’s New York-to-Washington corridor is far from full capacity.

4. Turn – HIGH SPEED RAIL runs on electricity generated from fossil fuels, consuming similar amounts of energy and causing the same emissions as SUV’s

O’Toole, Senior Fellow w/ the Cato Institute, August 2009 [Texas Public Policy Foundation, non-partisan research institute - Randal, “The High Cost of High-Speed Rail,” – Center for Economic Freedom, Accessed 6/8/12] SM

Electrically powered high-speed trains produce less greenhouse gases only if that electricity is generated from renewable power sources. Most electricity in the U.S. comes from fossil fuels, with the result that urban rail transit systems in such cities as Baltimore, Denver, Cleveland, Miami, and Washington generate as much or more greenhouse gases, per passenger mile, as driving an SUV, much less an ordinary car.73 It is far more cost-effective to save energy by encour- aging people to drive more fuel-efficient cars than to build and operate high-speed rail. Moreover, in places that do generate electricity from renewable sources, it would be more cost-effective to use that electricity to power electric or plug-in hybrid cars than high-speed rail.

1nC - HIGH SPEED RAIL Oil Dependency Advantage Frontline

**5. No impact Resource wars won’t happen – they are a net resource loss to wage – plus there are alt. causes to war, such as failure of governance. Countries will negotiate for resources.**

**Victor 08** (David G., writer for the National Interest, “Smoke and Mirrors,” Jan-Feb 2008 issue, http://nationalinterest.org/article/smoke-and-mirrors-1924)

MY ARGUMENT is that classic resource wars-hot conflicts driven by a struggle to grab resources-are increasingly rare. Even where resources play a role, they are rarely the root cause of bloodshed. Rather, the root cause usually lies in various failures of governance. That argument-in both its classic form and in its more nuanced incarnation-is hardly a straw man, as Thomas Homer-Dixon asserts. Setting aside hyperbole, the punditry increasingly points to resources as a cause of war. And so do social scientists and policy analysts, even with their more nuanced views. I've triggered this debate because conventional wisdom puts too much emphasis on resources as a cause of conflict. Getting the story right has big implications for social scientists trying to unravel cause-and-effect and often even larger implications for public policy. Michael Klare is right to underscore Saddam Hussein's invasion of Kuwait, the only classic resource conflict in recent memory. That episode highlights two of the reasons why classic resource wars are becoming rare-they're expensive and rarely work. (And even in Kuwait's case, many other forces also spurred the invasion. Notably, Iraq felt insecure with its only access to the sea a narrow strip of land sandwiched between Kuwait on one side and its archenemy Iran on the other.) In the end, Saddam lost resources on the order of $100 billion (plus his country and then his head) in his quest for Kuwait's 1.5 million barrels per day of combined oil and gas output. By contrast, Exxon paid $80 billion to get Mobil's 1.7 million barrels per day of oil and gas production-a merger that has held and flourished. As the bulging sovereign wealth funds are discovering, it is easier to get resources through the stock exchange than the gun barrel.

1nC - HIGH SPEED RAIL Oil Dependency Advantage Frontline

**6. No impact—tensions de-escalating between US and Iran**

**National Post 3/2/12**

<http://business.financialpost.com/2012/03/02/oil-declines-as-obama-reduces-iran-tension/?__lsa=6a178ad9> **accessed tm 3/3**

Oil fell the most since December as President Barack Obama said a pre-emptive strike on Iran might generate “sympathy” for the Persian Gulf country, easing concern that an attack would take place. Prices fell as much as 2.8 percent after Obama said in an interview with The Atlantic magazine that a strike without warning might allow Iran to portray itself as a victim. Futures also declined as the dollar rose before reports next week that may show U.S. economic growth. “Obama is saying that we don’t want to attack Iran prematurely and that’s alleviating some concern,” said Phil Flynn, an analyst at PFGBest in Chicago. “An imminent attack is probably less likely based on the article and we seem to be reducing the Iran risk premium.”

Ext 1nC #1 - HIGH SPEED RAIL Oil Dependency Advantage – No Benefit

HIGH SPEED RAIL has no environmental or energy benefit whatsoever

O’Toole, Senior Fellow w/ the Cato Institute, August 2009 [Texas Public Policy Foundation, non-partisan research institute - Randal, “The High Cost of High-Speed Rail,” – Center for Economic Freedom, Accessed 6/8/12] SM

When announcing his high-speed rail vision, Presi- dent Obama promised high-speed rail would pro- vide “clean, energy-efficient transportation.”62 Many people take it for granted that trains use significantly less energy and produce less pollution and green- house gas emissions than other forms of travel. In fact, however, passenger rail’s environmental ben- efits are negligible and costly. Automobiles consume a huge amount of energy, but that’s because they provide so much travel: more than 4 trillion passenger miles a year, and about 85 percent of all passenger travel in the United States. When considered on a per-passenger-mile basis, au- tomobiles are very close to passenger trains. Many analyses presume that the average auto on the road carries 1.6 people, and based on this Amtrak is more energy efficient than cars. In fact, 1.6 people per car is an average of urban and intercity travel, while intercity autos tend to carry more people. An independent analysis for the California High-Speed Rail Authority found that intercity autos average 2.4 people.63At 2.4 people per vehicle, Amtrak is only 8 percent more energy efficient than light trucks and 15 per- cent less energy efficient than cars (table 5). Amtrak doesn’t come close to fuel-efficient cars like the Toy- ota Prius, even one carrying only 1.6 people. As an analysis by the Department of Energy conclud- ed, “intercity auto trips tend to be relatively efficient highway trips with higher-than-average vehicle oc- cupancy rates—on average, they are as energy- efficient as rail intercity trips.”64 If we really wanted to save energy using mass transportation, intercity buses use far less energy per passenger mile than passenger trains.

Current transportation sector is comparatively beneficial for energy efficiency – future innovations within the pre-existing infrastructure solve

O’Toole, Senior Fellow w/ the Cato Institute, August 2009 [Texas Public Policy Foundation, non-partisan research institute - Randal, “The High Cost of High-Speed Rail,” – Center for Economic Freedom, Accessed 6/8/12] SM

Not only are autos as energy efficient as Amtrak to- day, long-term trends favor autos and airlines over trains. Since 1975, airlines have cut the energy they use per passenger mile by more than half, while Amtrak’s energy efficiency has grown by just 25 per- cent (table 6). Automobile energy efficiencies grew rapidly when gas prices were high, more slowly when prices were low. But even when prices were low, auto manufacturers improved the energy effi- ciencies of engines so that the number of ton-miles per gallon continued to increase.65 Both the airline industry and auto manufacturers improved the energy effi- ciencies of engines so that the number of ton-miles per gallon continued to increase.65 Both the airline industry and auto manufacturers expect their energy efficiencies to continue to in- crease. Boeing promises its 787 plane will be 20 per- cent more fuel efficient than comparable planes today.66 Jet engine makers expect to double fuel effi- ciency by 2020.67 Automakers signed on to President Obama’s 2016 fuel-efficiency targets.68 If they meet those targets, the average cars and light trucks on the road in 2025 will be 30 percent more energy effi- cient than they are today, even if the fuel-efficiencies of new cars do not increase after 2016.69 Steven Polzin, of the University of South Florida’s Center for Urban Transportation Research, points out that autos and buses have relatively short life cycles, so they can readily adapt to the need to save energy or reduce pollution. Rail systems “may be far more difficult or expensive to upgrade to newer, more ef- ficient technologies,” Polzin adds.70 In other words, the American auto fleet almost com- pletely turns over every 18 years, and the airline fleet turns over every 21 years, so both can quickly be- come more fuel-efficient. But builders of rail lines are stuck with whatever technology they select for at least three to four decades. This means that any energy comparisons of moderate- or high-speed rail with air or auto travel must compare rails with air- line or auto efficiencies in 15 to 20 years, not those today.

1nC CP - International Actor – China

Text: China’s Railway Ministry should supply the necessary technology, equipment, and engineers to build a national high-speed rail network in the US.

Contention 1—competition avoids fiscal discipline DA

Contention 2--- solvency

China & US states will say yes, China has scientific capability to do so – California proves

Bradsher, Hong Kong bureau chief of The New York Times, covering Asian business, economic, political and science news, April 7, 2010 [New York Times – Keith, “China is Eager to Bring High Speed Rail to the US,” Transportation%20Topic/HSR%20Neg/China%20Offers%20High%20Speed%20Rail%20to%20California%20-%20NYTimes.com.webarchive, Acessed 6/9/12] SM

BEIJING — Nearly 150 years after American railroads brought in thousands of Chinese laborers to build rail lines across the West, [China](http://topics.nytimes.com/top/news/international/countriesandterritories/china/index.html?inline=nyt-geo) is poised once again to play a role in American rail construction. But this time, it would be an entirely different role: supplying the technology, equipment and engineers to build [high-speed rail](http://topics.nytimes.com/top/reference/timestopics/subjects/h/high_speed_rail_projects/index.html?inline=nyt-classifier) lines.

The Chinese government has signed cooperation agreements with the State of California and [General Electric](http://topics.nytimes.com/top/news/business/companies/general_electric_company/index.html?inline=nyt-org) to help build such lines. The agreements, both of which are preliminary, show China’s desire to become a big exporter and licensor of bullet trains tra veling 215 miles an hour, an environmentally friendly technology in which China has raced past the United States in the last few years.“We are the most advanced in many fields, and we are willing to share with the United States,” Zheng Jian, the chief planner and director of high-speed rail at China’s railway ministry, said.Gov. [Arnold Schwarzenegger](http://topics.nytimes.com/top/reference/timestopics/people/s/arnold_schwarzenegger/index.html?inline=nyt-per) of California has closely followed progress in the discussions with China and hopes to come here later this year for talks with rail ministry officials, said David Crane, the governor’s special adviser for jobs and economic growth, and a board member of the California High Speed Rail Authority.China is offering not just to build a railroad in California but also to help finance its construction, and Chinese officials have already been shuttling between Beijing and Sacramento to make presentations, Mr. Crane said in a telephone interview.China is not the only country interested in selling high-speed rail equipment to the United States. Japan, Germany, South Korea, Spain, France and Italy have also approached California’s High Speed Rail Authority.The agency has made no decisions on whose technology to choose. But Mr. Crane said that there were no apparent weaknesses in the Chinese offer, and that Governor Schwarzenegger particularly wanted to visit China this year for high-speed rail discussions.

China already has a framework in place to bypass American market restrictions – China can license its tech, supply engineers and part of the components

Bradsher, Hong Kong bureau chief of The New York Times, covering Asian business, economic, political and science news, April 7, 2010 [New York Times – Keith, “China is Eager to Bring High Speed Rail to the US,” Transportation%20Topic/HSR%20Neg/China%20Offers%20High%20Speed%20Rail%20to%20California%20-%20NYTimes.com.webarchive, Acessed 6/9/12] SM

The railways ministry has concluded a framework agreement to license its technology to G.E., which is a world leader in diesel locomotives but has little experience with the electric locomotives needed for high speeds.

According to G.E., the agreement calls for at least 80 percent of the components of any locomotives and system control gear to come from American suppliers, and labor-intensive final assembly would be done in the United States for the American market. China would license its technology and supply engineers as well as up to 20 percent of the components. State-owned Chinese equipment manufacturers initially licensed many of their designs over the last decade from Japan, Germany and France. While Chinese companies have gone on to make many changes and innovations, Japanese executives in particular have grumbled that Chinese technology resembles theirs, raising the possibility of legal challenges if any patents have been violated. All of the technology would be Chinese, Mr. Zheng said.

2nC CP Ext - International Actor – China – Generic Solvency

China has the technical expertise and capability to export high-speed rail systems to America markets – trade and dialogue between California and China already exists now

Bradsher, Hong Kong bureau chief of The New York Times, covering Asian business, economic, political and science news, April 7, 2010 [New York Times – Keith, “China is Eager to Bring High Speed Rail to the US,” Transportation%20Topic/HSR%20Neg/China%20Offers%20High%20Speed%20Rail%20to%20California%20-%20NYTimes.com.webarchive, Acessed 6/9/12] SM

China has already begun building high-speed rail routes in Turkey, Venezuela and Saudi Arabia. It is looking for opportunities in seven other countries, notably a route sought by the Brazilian government between São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro, Mr. Zheng said. International rail experts say that China has mastered the art of building high-speed rail lines quickly and inexpensively.“These guys are engineering driven — they know how to build fast, build cheaply and do a good job,” said John Scales, the lead transport specialist in the Beijing office of the [World Bank](http://topics.nytimes.com/top/reference/timestopics/organizations/w/world_bank/index.html?inline=nyt-org).The California rail authority plans to spend $43 billion to build a 465-mile route from San Francisco to Los Angeles and on to Anaheim that is supposed to open in 2020. The authority was awarded $2.25 billion in January in federal economic stimulus money to work on the project.The authority’s plans call for $10 billion to $12 billion in private financing. Mr. Crane said China could provide much of that, with federal, state and local jurisdictions providing the rest. Mr. Zheng declined to discuss financial details. China’s mostly state-controlled banks had few losses during the global financial crisis and are awash with cash now because of tight regulation and a fast-growing economy. The Chinese government is also becoming disenchanted with bonds and looking to diversify its $2.4 trillion in foreign reserves by investing in areas like natural resources and overseas rail projects.“They’ve got a lot of capital, and they’re willing to provide a lot of capital” for a California high-speed rail system, Mr. Crane said.Later plans call for the California line to be extended to Sacramento and San Diego, while a private consortium hopes to build a separate route from Los Angeles to Las Vegas.[Toyota](http://topics.nytimes.com/top/news/business/companies/toyota_motor_corporation/index.html?inline=nyt-org) is shutting a big assembly plant in Fremont, Calif., that it once operated as a joint venture with [General Motors](http://topics.nytimes.com/top/news/business/companies/general_motors_corporation/index.html?inline=nyt-org), and one idea under discussion is converting the factory to the assembly of high-speed rail equipment, said Mr. Crane, who is also a member of the state’s Economic Development Commission.Rail parts from China would then come through the nearby port of Oakland, in place of auto parts from Japan.“High-speed rail requires a lot of high technology — we would send many high-end engineers and high-end technicians” to California, Mr. Zheng said.G.E. estimates that the United States will spend $13 billion in the next five years on high-speed rail routes. China, with a much more ambitious infrastructure program, will spend $300 billion in the next three years on overall expansion of its rail routes, mainly high-speed routes, according to G.E.China’s long-term vision calls for high-speed rail routes linking Shanghai to Singapore and New Delhi by way of Myanmar, and someday connecting Beijing and Shanghai to Moscow to the northwest and through Tehran to Prague and Berlin, according to a map that Mr. Zheng keeps on a bookshelf behind his desk. He cautioned that there were no plans to start construction yet outside China.A high-speed rail link for passengers from Beijing to Shanghai will be finished by the end of 2011 or early 2012, and cut the journey to four hours, from 10 hours now, Mr. Zheng said.New York to Atlanta or Chicago is a similar distance, and takes 18 to 19 hours on [Amtrak](http://topics.nytimes.com/top/news/business/companies/amtrak/index.html?inline=nyt-org), which must share tracks with 12,000-ton freight trains and many commuter trains.For the American market, Mr. Zheng said, “we can provide whatever services are needed.”

1nC States Counterplan Shell

Text: The 50 states of the United States and relevant territories should substantially increase its investment in a high-speed rail network modeled after the Midwestern Regional Rail Initiative. Requisite funding guaranteed.

Contention 1-competition—avoids politics and federalism

Contention 2-solvency

States can engage in cross border revenue sharing to offset costs

Ridlington & Kerth et al, policy analysts with the Frontier Group, environmental think take in affiliation with the Public Interest Network, Fall 2010 [Wisconsin Public Interest Research Group – Elizabeth & Rob, Brian Imus [Illinois PIRG Education Fund & Bruce Speight, WISPIRG Foundation “Connecting the Midwest, - How a Faster Passenger Rail Network Could Speed Travel and Boost the Economy,” Accessed 6/9/12] SM

The Midwestern Regional Rail Initiative proposal exists largely because of successful collaboration among Midwestern states, coordination that has been more effective than in any other region of the nation. Continued coordinated and complimentary effort will be necessary for the proposal to succeed. States that have received funding under the Recovery Act should recognize that their own rail investments will not realize their full value unless other states are able to construct their own sections of the regional network. States that have not yet found funding to begin their projects should recognize that, for the first time, concrete steps towards the creation of a new regional passenger network are underway, and continue to advocate for their own seg- ments of that network. In some cases, such as the rail line from Madison to the Twin Cities—which will be built in Wisconsin but provide a benefit to Minnesota—cost and revenue sharing between states may be necessary. No one state in the Midwest is capable of developing a high-speed rail network alone. The potential of such a network lies in its ability to link together an entire region, following economic ties rather than state boundaries and producing a system in which the whole is much greater than the sum of its parts. The governors of the Midwestern states have shown strong lead- ership on the issue of building a regional rail network. Strong public support by the Midwest Governors Association has helped push an integrated regional vision that has drawn federal financial support. Midwestern states and governors and the Midwestern Interstate Passenger Rail Commission should continue to collabo- rate closely in planning and constructing a rail system, ensuring that their investments are complementary and build towards an integrated regional network.

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