

RESOLUTION NO. 2023-_____

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF POCATELLO, A MUNICIPAL CORPORATION OF IDAHO, EXPRESSING SUPPORT OF RESTORING PASSENGER RAIL SERVICE, KNOWN AS THE PIONEER, FROM PORTLAND TO SALT LAKE CITY WITH A STOP IN POCATELLO; ADVOCATING FOR A FRAMEWORK TO SUPPORT SUCH EFFORT; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

WHEREAS, much of rural America is underserved by long-distance intercity passenger rail options and Amtrak’s recent service announcement and accompanying ConnectUs plan service map fails to recognize that shortcoming and bring passenger rail service to long overlooked communities in much of rural America, including the Greater Northwest, defined as Washington, Oregon, Idaho, Utah, Colorado, Wyoming, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, and portions of Minnesota and Wisconsin; and

WHEREAS, for many years, Americans living in the Greater Northwest have not had good access to passenger rail services; and

WHEREAS, the lack of rail service, loss of air service at smaller airports in the region, and significant economic impact intercity passenger rail service can provide has fueled interest at the local, county, and state level in the Greater Northwest region to join forces to find innovative ways to move our people; and

WHEREAS, passenger rail has multiple service capabilities that airlines cannot match, a single rail line can simultaneously serve local, regional, and long-distance travel needs safely transporting some passengers long distances while carrying local passengers to work, medical providers, or social events; and

WHEREAS, in 2008, Congress directed Amtrak to review several routes across the Greater Northwest as part of the Railroad Safety Enhancement Act of 2008 and that study proposed restoring the Pioneer line from Portland through Boise to Salt Lake City and the

North Coast Hiawatha line serving Montana and North Dakota, yet the Pioneer and Hiawatha Lines were not restored; and

WHEREAS, President Biden has expressed interest in “sparking the second great railroad revolution.”

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF POCA TELLO AS FOLLOWS:

1. To support restoration of daily Amtrak passenger rail service on the Pioneer route from Portland to Salt Lake City through Caldwell and other cities in Idaho and eastern Oregon and the North Coast Hiawatha route serving Montana and southern North Dakota and connecting in Idaho to the Pioneer and Empire Builder routes by:

a. Advocating to a bipartisan group in Congress representing this region to work toward restoring passenger rail service to the Greater Northwest

b. Requesting passage of legislation in the 117th Congress formalizing the Greater Northwest Passenger Rail Working Group and authorizing up to ten such working groups modeled after the congressionally established Gulf Coast Working Group to create studies and plans for the restoration of service.

c. Supporting passage of the Interstate Rail Compacts Advancement Act of 2021 by the 117th Congress, which authorizes the formation of up to ten Interstate Passenger Rail Compacts/Commissions, modeled after the Southern Rail Commission, to carry the Working Group studies forward to implementation.

d. Supporting allocation of twenty-five percent (25%) of any congressionally authorized funding to restore and revitalize passenger rail service in the United States for rural long-distance routes through a combination of reinvestment in existing long-distance routes

and expansion of the national rural long-distance network to include restoration of both the Pioneer and North Coast Hiawatha routes.

2. This Resolution shall be in full force and effect immediately upon its adoption and approval.

RESOLVED this 2nd day of March, 2023.

CITY OF POCA TELLO, a municipal
corporation of Idaho

BRIAN C. BLAD, Mayor

ATTEST:

KONNI R. KENDELL, City Clerk