

Press Releases

Committee Leaders Introduce Positive Train Control Deadline Extension

Transportation and Infrastructure Committee leaders today introduced bipartisan legislation to extend the deadline for U.S. railroads to implement Positive Train Control technology.

Congress mandated that freight railroad lines carrying certain toxic materials, passenger railroads, and commuter railroads implement Positive Train Control technology by December 31, 2015. However, most freight and commuter railroads have reported that they will not be able to meet the deadline, and require more time to complete implementation. Recently, a [Government Accountability Office study](#) on the issue confirmed that railroads have faced a number of challenges in implementing the complex technology, and most will not be able to meet the deadline.

“Completion of the Positive Train Control mandate by the end of the year is not achievable, and extending the deadline is essential to preventing significant disruptions of both passenger and freight rail service across the country,” said **Transportation and Infrastructure Committee Chairman Bill Shuster (R-PA)**, one of the sponsors of the Positive Train Control Enforcement and Implementation Act of 2015 (H.R. 3651). “Railroads must implement this important but complicated safety technology in a responsible manner, and we need to give them the necessary time to do so.”

“This extension will ensure our nation’s railroads can continue to function and hold them accountable to implement necessary safety measures on a public timeline,” said **Railroads, Pipelines, and Hazardous Materials Subcommittee Chairman Jeff Denham (R-CA)**, also a sponsor of the bill. “Passenger and freight railroads have stated they can’t meet the current deadline and will shut down later this year. This includes ACE in my district. We must protect communities across the country from a railroad shutdown, which would damage local economies nationwide.”

Without an extension, freight railroads will be forced to suspend shipments of certain chemicals, including some used in treating drinking water and in fertilizers; commuter railroads will need to cease operations, significantly impacting commutes in major metropolitan regions; and all Amtrak service outside of portions of the Northeast Corridor will be suspended.

The Federal Railroad Administration and the Government Accountability Office have also previously recommended extending the Positive Train Control deadline.

The Positive Train Control Enforcement and Implementation Act of 2015 extends the deadline to fully implement the technology to the end of 2018, provides limited authority for the U.S. Department of Transportation Secretary to extend the deadline beyond 2018 if railroads demonstrate they are facing continued difficulties in completing the mandate, but have made every effort to install Positive Train Control as soon as possible, and requires railroads to complete progress reports on implementation.

[Click here to read the Positive Train Control Enforcement and Implementation Act of 2015.](#)

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