FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Amtrak to provide matching funds for Southwest Chief route

WASHINGTON – Amtrak has informed federal, state and local officials along the route of the daily Southwest Chief that, with the enactment of the recent full-year funding bill by Congress, it will provide matching funds to enable a federal grant to be awarded for safety and reliability upgrades on the train’s route in Kansas, Colorado and New Mexico.

Earlier this month, Congress passed and the President signed into law the FY2019 Appropriations Act, which included critical funding for Amtrak and intercity passenger rail. The legislation set aside at least $50 million of its National Network grant for improvements to the Southwest Chief route. Amtrak is using $3 million of these funds to match a $16 million grant successfully sought by these states, counties and cities and awarded to Colfax County, N.M. The grant and matching funds from the partners will result in an investment of more than $26 million.

Amtrak and BNSF Railway began community discussions regarding needed route safety and other infrastructure improvements in 2011. Since then, more than $80 million has been committed from U.S. DOT grant programs, state and local governments, Amtrak and BNSF.

Amtrak will use the newly available federal capital funding in coordination with these stakeholders to continue needed work on the next route segment in New Mexico. Amtrak is also working on a long-term financial plan with our state and local partners to address the unique challenges of this route, particularly where Amtrak is the only user of these BNSF tracks in Colorado and New Mexico.

The Southwest Chief, Amtrak Trains 3 & 4, provides a daily service between Chicago and Los Angeles and is the shortest and fastest Amtrak route between those cities.

About Amtrak®
Amtrak offers a more comfortable and convenient travel experience with free Wi-Fi on most trains, plenty of leg room and no middle seat. With our state and commuter partners, we move people, the economy and the nation forward, carrying more than 30 million Amtrak customers for each of the past seven years. Amtrak operates more than 300 trains daily, connecting more than 500 destinations in 46 states, the District of Columbia and three Canadian Provinces, and reaches 400 additional destinations via connecting bus routes. Learn more at Amtrak.com.

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