A BILL FOR AN ACT

CONCERNING THE CONDITIONS UNDER WHICH THE SOUTHWEST CHIEF RAIL LINE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, RURAL TOURISM, AND INFRASTRUCTURE REPAIR AND MAINTENANCE COMMISSION MAY EXPEND MONEY FROM THE SOUTHWEST CHIEF RAIL LINE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, RURAL TOURISM, AND INFRASTRUCTURE REPAIR AND MAINTENANCE FUND, AND, IN CONNECTION THEREWITH, MAKING AN APPROPRIATION.

Bill Summary

(Note: This summary applies to this bill as introduced and does not reflect any amendments that may be subsequently adopted. If this bill passes third reading in the house of introduction, a bill summary that applies to the reengrossed version of this bill will be available at http://www.leg.state.co.us/billsummaries.)
Current law allows the southwest chief rail line economic development, rural tourism, and infrastructure repair and maintenance commission (commission) to expend money from the southwest chief rail line economic development, rural tourism, and infrastructure repair and maintenance fund (fund) only if:

- Amtrak, the Burlington Northern and Santa Fe railway, and the states of Kansas, Colorado, and New Mexico all formally agree to make necessary financial contributions and take other specified actions needed to ensure that Amtrak southwest chief rail line service continues in Colorado, that a new stop is added in Pueblo, and that track upgrades, maintenance, and other required actions to be funded under the terms of their agreement are made;
- Amtrak confirms in writing that the southwest chief rail line will continue to stop in Lamar, La Junta, and Trinidad, that the southwest chief rail line will add a regular stop in Pueblo within 5 years from the date the commission first expends moneys from the fund, and that Amtrak will explore the potential benefits of also adding a regular stop in Walsenburg; and
- Amtrak, the Burlington Northern and Santa Fe railway, and the states of Kansas and New Mexico agree to spend an aggregate amount of at least $15.2 million per year for 10 years.

The bill modifies the current requirements by:

- Eliminating the requirements that the state of Kansas and New Mexico enter into an agreement;
- Replacing the requirement that a regular stop be added in Pueblo with a requirement that Amtrak explore the potential benefits of adding such a stop; and
- Replacing the requirement that Amtrak, the Burlington Northern and Santa Fe railway, and the states of Kansas and New Mexico all agree to spend an aggregate amount of at least $15.2 million per year for 10 years with a requirement that Amtrak and the Burlington Northern and Santa Fe railway spend at least $16 million towards repair.

For the 2015-16 fiscal year, the bill appropriates $8.91 million from the general fund to the fund for use by the commission.

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1 Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Colorado:

2 SECTION 1. In Colorado Revised Statutes, 43-4-1001, amend
(d) It is therefore necessary and appropriate to:

(III) Specify that the commission may expend moneys from the
fund only in furtherance of such purposes, only to the extent appropriated
by the general assembly, and:

(C) Only if a formal agreement is reached under which Amtrak, the Burlington Northern and Santa Fe railway, and the states of Kansas, Colorado and New Mexico all agree to make necessary financial contributions and take other specified actions needed to ensure the achievement of such purposes, track upgrades, maintenance, and other required actions to be funded under the terms of the agreement.

SECTION 2. In Colorado Revised Statutes, 43-4-1002, amend (2) as follows:

43-4-1002. Southwest chief rail line economic development, rural tourism, and infrastructure repair and maintenance fund - creation - use of fund. (2) The commission may only expend moneys from the fund for the purposes of rail replacement or other improvements or for costs associated with the expansion of southwest chief rail line service to include a stop in Pueblo if:

(a) Amtrak confirms in writing that the southwest chief rail line will continue to stop in Lamar, La Junta, and Trinidad that the southwest chief rail line will add a regular stop in Pueblo within five years from the date the commission first expends moneys for those purposes from the
fund; and that Amtrak will explore the potential benefits, including but
not limited to benefits of increased tourism and other economic benefits,
of also adding a regular stop in PUEBLO AND Walsenburg; and

(b) The states of Kansas and New Mexico; Amtrak and the
Burlington Northern and Santa Fe railway commit in writing to expend
an average aggregate amount of at least fifteen million two hundred
thousand dollars per year for each of the ten years beginning with the year
in which the commission first expends moneys for those purposes from
the fund AT LEAST SIXTEEN MILLION DOLLARS TOWARDS REPAIR.

SECTION 3. Appropriation. (1) For the 2015-16 state fiscal
year, $8,910,000 is appropriated to the southwest chief rail line economic
development, rural tourism, and infrastructure repair and maintenance
fund created in section 43-4-1002 (1), C.R.S. This appropriation is from
the general fund. The department of transportation is responsible for the
accounting related to this appropriation.

(2) For the 2015-16 state fiscal year, $8,910,000 is appropriated
to the department of transportation for use by the southwest chief rail line
economic development, rural tourism, and infrastructure repair and
maintenance commission. This appropriation is from reappropriated funds
in the fund under subsection (1) of this section. To implement this act, the
commission may use the appropriation for the purposes specified in
section 43-4-1002, C.R.S.

SECTION 4. Safety clause. The general assembly hereby finds,
determines, and declares that this act is necessary for the immediate
preservation of the public peace, health, and safety.