

**BEFORE THE
SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BOARD**

ENTERED
Office of Proceedings
May 31, 2018
Part of
Public Record

Finance Docket No. 36025

**TEXAS CENTRAL RAILROAD AND INFRASTRUCTURE, INC. &
TEXAS CENTRAL RAILROAD, LLC
-AUTHORITY TO CONSTRUCT AND OPERATE-
PETITION FOR EXEMPTION FROM 49 U.S.C. § 10901 AND SUBTITLE IV -
PASSENGER RAIL LINE BETWEEN DALLAS, TX AND HOUSTON, TX**

**REPLY OF THE NATIONAL RAILROAD PASSENGER CORPORATION
(AMTRAK) TO TEXAS CENTRAL'S PETITION TO REOPEN**

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Dated: May 31, 2018

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As indicated in the petition filed by the Texas Central Railroad and Infrastructure, Inc., and Texas Central Railroad, LLC ("Texas Central") in this docket, the National Railroad Passenger Corporation ("Amtrak") and Texas Central have entered into a Voluntary Coordination Agreement and a Reservation and Ticketing Agreement. These agreements provide for Amtrak to sell through tickets, via its reservation system and sales channels, to passengers traveling between points on Amtrak's national route network and points on Texas Central's Dallas-Houston high speed train route.

Amtrak is submitting these comments to apprise the Board of facts pertaining to this through ticketing arrangement, and the connectivity it will create between Amtrak and Texas Central, that may be relevant to the Board's determination of the issues in this proceeding.

Amtrak Background

Amtrak, which was created by the Rail Passenger Service Act ("RPSA") of 1970, is America's intercity passenger railroad. It operates a nationwide rail network, serving more than 500 destinations in 46 states, the District of Columbia and three Canadian provinces, on more than 21,400 miles of routes. Amtrak operates the Boston-Washington Northeast Corridor; 29 state-supported short distance routes in partnership with one or more of its 21 state partners; and 15 long distance routes of 750 or more miles in length, each of which serves between three and twelve states.

Through Ticketing Arrangements

As contemplated by the RPSA, 49 U.S.C. 24305(d), Amtrak has extended the reach of its national rail network by entering into through ticketing arrangements with other carriers who provide connecting services that are called Amtrak Thruway Services. These through ticketing arrangements allow Amtrak passengers to travel on a single ticket via Amtrak trains and connecting trains, buses, vans, ferries and other modes to destinations not served, or not directly served, by Amtrak's rail network. An average of 600 daily Amtrak Thruway schedules extend Amtrak service to more than 400 communities not served directly by Amtrak trains in 38 states and Canada, and provide additional travel options to many other Amtrak-served communities.

Amtrak also has code sharing and ticket honoring agreements with many rail, bus and air service carriers that enable passengers to travel on Amtrak trains and these carriers under a single ticket. In FY 2017, Amtrak carried 31.7 million intercity rail passengers and sold tickets for 1.6 million trips on connecting Thruway services operated by other carriers. The connecting

services provided by these carriers are an integral part of Amtrak's interstate rail passenger network.

Most connecting carriers serve Amtrak stations. However, in a number of cases passengers transfer between Amtrak's station and the connecting carrier's station or terminal via another mode. United Air Lines passengers traveling under the code sharing arrangement between Amtrak and United travel by Amtrak train to the Newark Liberty International Airport rail station, where they board a monorail for the two mile trip to United's terminal. Amtrak provides seasonal service to Newport, Rhode Island, a popular summer destination, under a through ticketing arrangement with a ferry company that includes a transfer via a local transit bus between the Amtrak station and the ferry terminal in Providence. In the same way, Texas Central will provide a convenient transfer service between its stations in Dallas and Houston and the Amtrak stations serving those cities.

Similar arrangements for through passengers connecting between trains serving different stations were utilized during most of the period when intercity rail passenger service was provided by multiple railroads. Prior to Amtrak's creation, many major cities had more than one intercity rail station, and passengers holding through tickets for connecting travel often used motor vehicle connections to transfer between stations. From 1853 to 1955, the Parmelee Company operated a transfer service – originally with horse cars, and later with motor vehicles – among Chicago's eight rail stations for passengers connecting between trains of different railroads. Passengers with tickets for trips that required a transfer between

stations received a transfer coupon, usually included without additional charge in the price of their tickets, that allowed them to ride Parmelee's motor vehicles.¹

Amtrak Service in Texas

Three Amtrak routes presently serve Texas. Two are long distance routes. The *Sunset Limited* operates three times a week between New Orleans and Los Angeles via Houston and San Antonio. The *Texas Eagle* provides daily service between Chicago and San Antonio via Dallas and Fort Worth. On the three days a week the *Sunset Limited* operates, a section of the *Texas Eagle* continues from San Antonio to Los Angeles as part of the *Sunset Limited*, providing through service between Chicago and other points on the *Texas Eagle* route and Los Angeles. The third route - the state-supported *Heartland Flyer*, funded primarily by the states of Texas and Oklahoma - provides a daily round trip between Oklahoma City and Fort Worth.

Long before Dallas and Houston grew to become the United States' fourth and fifth largest metropolitan areas, Amtrak sought to connect the Dallas-to-Houston corridor to its national rail network. When Amtrak commenced service in 1971, it planned to reroute its Chicago-to-Texas long distance train, then known as the *Texas Chief*, to serve the Dallas-Houston corridor. The high cost of track and signal upgrades initially precluded implementation of that plan.² In 1988, Amtrak did begin operating a section of the *Texas Eagle* between Dallas and Houston; however, it was discontinued in 1995 due to funding constraints.³

¹ See Pennsylvania Railroad system timetable dated September 27, 1953 (pertinent excerpts attached) and *Parmelee Transportation Co. v. United States*, 351 F.2d 619 (Ct. Claims 1965).

² Craig Sanders, "Amtrak in the Heartland" (Indiana University Press 2006) <https://books.google.com/books?isbn=0253027934>, pp. 107-108.

³ *Id.*, p. 120.

Since the discontinuance of its Dallas-Houston service, Amtrak has provided a Thruway bus connection – in a motor coach carrying only Amtrak passengers - between Houston and Longview, Texas, a station on the *Texas Eagle* route. The bus connection allows passengers to travel between Houston and the 18 *Texas Eagle*-served stations north of Longview. Sixteen of these 18 stations are located in Arkansas, Missouri and Illinois; one (Marshall) is in Texas; and another (Texarkana) straddles the Texas/Arkansas state line. At Chicago and St. Louis, the *Texas Eagle* connects with other Amtrak routes, allowing Houston passengers using the Houston-Longview connecting bus to make connections to points throughout Amtrak's national route network.

The vast majority of the Amtrak passengers traveling to/from Houston via the *Texas Eagle's* Thruway bus connection are making interstate trips. During Amtrak's most recent fiscal year, 92% were traveling to or from one of the 16 *Texas Eagle*-served stations in Arkansas, Missouri and Illinois; only 8% were making intrastate trips within Texas. These Houston passengers began or ended their Amtrak trips at 242 different stations throughout Amtrak's national route network.

For passengers traveling between Houston and the six stations on the Oklahoma City-Fort Worth *Heartland Flyer* route north of Fort Worth – all but one of which is in Oklahoma – Amtrak offers a Thruway connection with through ticketing on a Houston-Fort Worth Greyhound bus. Because the bus is a regularly scheduled Greyhound trip that also carries bus passengers who are not connecting to the *Heartland Flyer*, it is not timed to provide a close connection with the train. Northbound passengers connecting from bus to train at Fort Worth have a 3 hour-and-45 minute layover after their six-hour bus trip. While the bus serves Bryan-

College Station where Texas A&M University is located, its schedule does not permit connections to the *Texas Eagle* at Fort Worth.

As noted above, direct Amtrak service is available to passengers traveling between Dallas and points on the *Sunset Limited* route west of San Antonio. However there is no direct rail, or connecting bus, service available to Amtrak passengers traveling between Dallas/Fort Worth and points on the *Sunset Limited* route east of Houston. The only rail option for passengers traveling from Dallas/Fort Worth to New Orleans (where the *Sunset Limited* connects with two other Amtrak long distance routes), the five other *Sunset Limited*-served stations in Louisiana, and Beaumont, Texas, is a very circuitous rail trip on the *Texas Eagle* to San Antonio to connect with the *Sunset Limited* that includes a lengthy, middle-of-the-night layover.

Benefits of the Through Ticketing Arrangement

The through ticketing arrangement between Amtrak and Texas Central will fill a major missing link in Amtrak's national network: the Dallas/Fort Worth to Houston corridor. Texas Central's frequent high speed service will provide convenient new connections between Texas's most heavily populated metropolitan areas for passengers traveling on all three of the Amtrak routes that serve Texas:

- For passengers traveling between Houston and points on the *Texas Eagle* route north of Longview – or to the College Station area, to which no connection to the *Texas Eagle* and Amtrak's long distance network is available today – the through ticketing arrangement will provide a new high speed rail option to reach their destination.

- Houston and College Station area passengers traveling to points on the Fort Worth-Oklahoma City *Heartland Flyer* route will be able to significantly reduce their travel time compared to the current bus-rail schedule by utilizing the frequent Trinity Railway Express commuter rail service between Dallas and Fort Worth to connect between Texas Central's high speed Houston-Dallas service and the *Heartland Flyer*.
- Dallas-bound passengers from points on the *Sunset Limited* route east of Houston will be able to travel between Houston and Dallas in just 90 minutes – a trip that would take more than 20 hours by rail today due to the lack of direct service.

Nearly all of the Amtrak passengers who will be able to take advantage of these new connections with Texas Central will be making interstate trips. Agreements like the through ticketing arrangement Amtrak and Texas Central have entered into allow Amtrak to expand the scope of its national network despite funding constraints and federal statutory requirements for state funding of new routes.

The connectivity provided by through ticketing with Texas Central's high-speed Dallas-to-Houston service will also benefit future Amtrak services in Texas. While Amtrak's current service to Texas is very limited, few, if any, states have greater potential - and need - for expanded intercity and interstate passenger rail service than Texas. Texas is the second largest U.S. state, with a population approaching 30 million. Its already congested highways and airports will not be capable of meeting future intercity transportation needs, putting aside the huge monetary and environmental costs of building more highway and airport capacity.

Dallas and Houston are included on two of the eleven federally-designated high speed rail corridors: the Gulf Coast High Speed Rail Corridor, which extends east to Atlanta, Georgia and Mobile, Alabama, and the South Central High Speed Rail Corridor, which connects Texas with Oklahoma City and Tulsa, Oklahoma.⁴ Future development of additional intercity passenger rail service along these corridors that connect with Texas Central's planned high speed rail line is essential to avoid highway and aviation system gridlock.

CONCLUSION

Amtrak believes that the joint ticketing arrangement it has entered into with Texas Central will benefit Amtrak and its passengers, and appreciates the Board's consideration of its reply.

Respectfully submitted,



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⁴ Federal Railroad Administration, "Vision for High Speed Rail in America" (2009), p. 6 (<file:///C:/Users/ursa/Downloads/hsrstrategicplan.pdf>).

VERIFICATION

I, Richard G. Slattery, declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct.

Further, I certify that I am qualified and authorized to file this reply. Executed on May 31, 2018.

Richard G. Slattery

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I hereby certify that I have this day, May 31, 2018, caused copies of the foregoing Reply of the National Railroad Passenger Corporation (Amtrak) to Petition to Reopen to be served by first class mail, postage prepaid, on all parties of record in this proceeding.

A handwritten signature in blue ink is written over a horizontal line. The signature is stylized and appears to be "J. J. [unclear]".

ISSUED SEPTEMBER 27, 1953

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PENNSYLVANIA



RAILROAD

PENNSYLVANIA



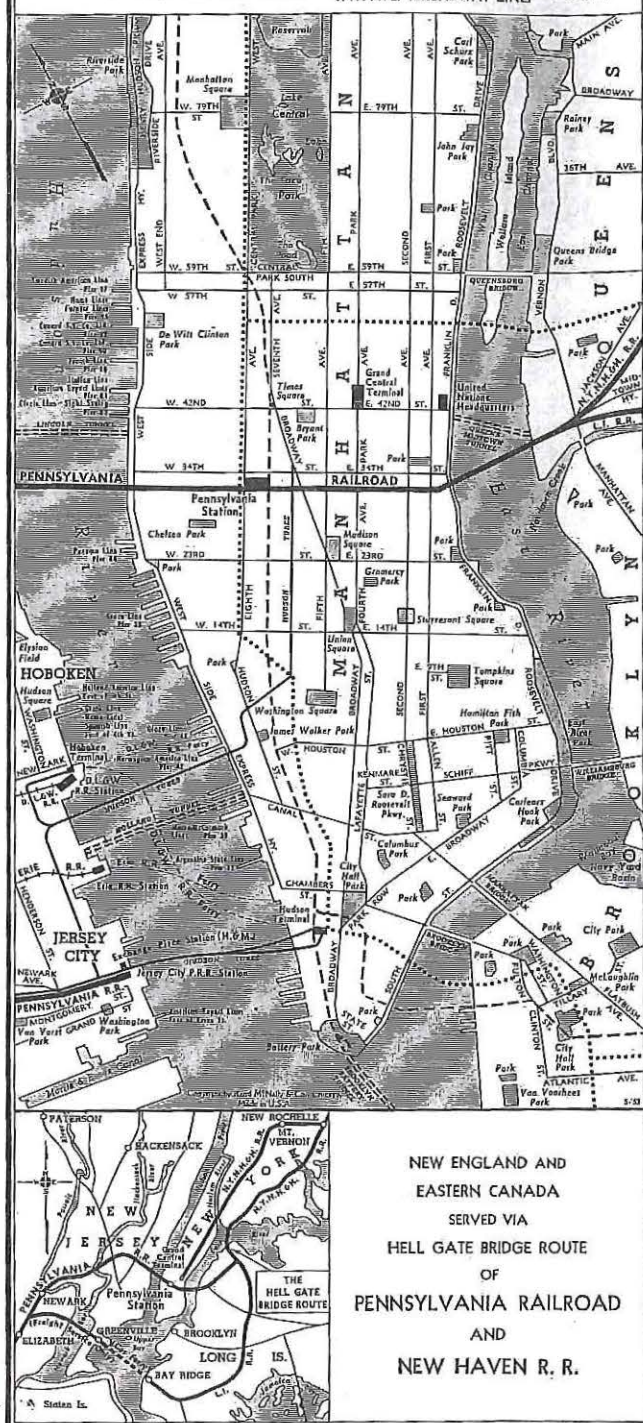
RAILROAD



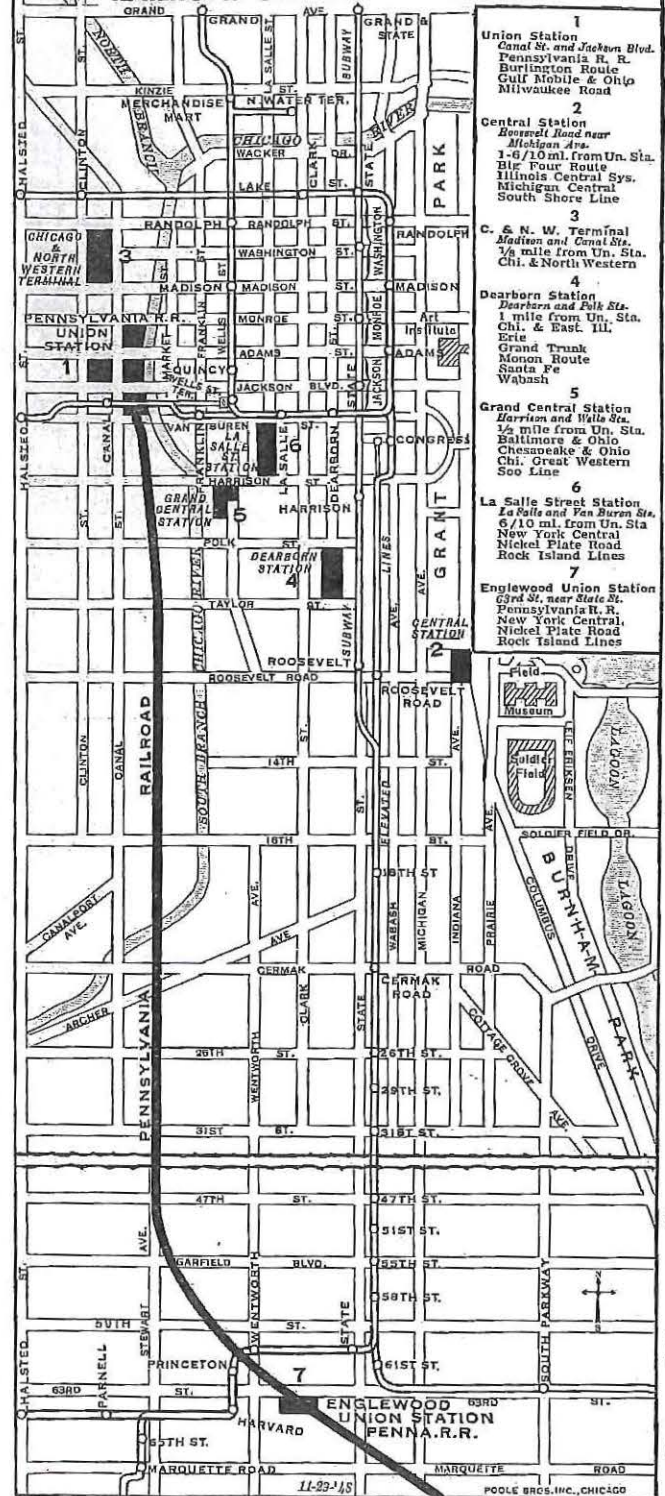
FORM 1

NEW YORK CITY, N. Y.

PENNSYLVANIA RAILROAD HUDSON TUBES
Principal Subway Lines Serving Pennsylvania Station
(8TH AVE. (INDEPENDENT LINE) 17TH AVE. (BROADWAY LINE))



RAILROAD STATIONS IN CHICAGO



GENERAL INFORMATION

PASSENGER

THE TIME from 12.01 a. m. to 12 o'clock noon, inclusive, is indicated by light-face type; from 12.01 p. m. to 12 o'clock midnight, inclusive, by dark-face type.

AIR-CONDITIONED TRAINS AND RECLINING SEAT COACHES—Air-conditioned equipment and reclining seat coaches have been assigned to regular sections of certain trains. Every effort will be made to provide this equipment but the right is reserved to employ non-air-conditioned cars and non-reclining seat coaches in such trains as may be necessitated by volume of traffic or operating contingencies.

PARLOR CARS—All parlor car service on the Pennsylvania Railroad, both local and interline, is operated by the Pullman Company.

ADJUSTMENT OF FARES—Should any misunderstanding arise with conductors or agents as to the proper fare or ticket privileges, please pay fare requested, take receipt and communicate with General Passenger Agent, Pennsylvania Station, Philadelphia 4, Pa.

CANCELLATION OF PULLMAN RESERVATIONS—If your plans change, you can do other travelers a favor by canceling your reservations promptly so they can use the space. When Pullman space is canceled prior to day of departure refund on tickets may be obtained through the ticket agent. During Winter tourist season December 1 to April 30 agents can refund Pullman tickets purchased for use in through sleeping cars operating from stations north of Washington, D. C., to stations south of Jacksonville, Fla., only if presented on or before the third day prior to day of departure. If space is canceled closer to departure time than indicated above, consult agent with respect to handling tickets for any refund due or forward them direct to General Passenger Agent, Pullman Company Merchandise Mart, Chicago 54, Ill.

CHILDREN—Under 5 years of age, free, when accompanied by parent or guardian; 5 years of age and under 12, one-half fare; 12 years of age or over, full fare.

INVALIDS AND INFIRM PASSENGERS—Wheelchair service is available at principal stations and the Pennsylvania Railroad will gladly arrange to assist passengers requiring special attention. There is no charge for this service. Advance notice may be given to the Station Master, Ticket Agent or any Passenger Traffic Representative when purchasing ticket or at start of your trip.

MEETING FRIENDS—Because Pennsylvania Railroad trains are sometimes operated in more than one section, it will be helpful to friends who plan to meet you to know the number or designation of the Pullman car or coach in which you have your reservation.

At the larger stations, a convenient central point to meet is the Information Bureau.

RED CAP PORTER SERVICE is available at principal stations at a charge of 25¢ for each bag or parcel. Carriers' liability is limited to not more than \$50.00 for each bag or parcel, including its contents unless greater value is declared in writing by passenger. An additional charge of 20¢ per bag or parcel will be made for each \$100.00 or fraction thereof declared in excess of \$50.00. The maximum declaration of value per bag or parcel will be \$500.00.

RESPONSIBILITY—The Pennsylvania Railroad is not responsible for errors in time tables, nor for inconvenience or damage resulting from delayed trains or failure to make connections, or for shortage of equipment. The schedules and equipment shown in this time table are subject to change without notice.

TRANSFER COACHES IN CHICAGO—The Parmelee Company operates transfer coach service at Chicago to accommodate Pennsylvania Railroad patrons, arriving at the Union Station, who desire to transfer to other railroad stations. This service is available without extra charge upon presentation of the usual transfer coupon accompanying tickets reading to points 85 miles or greater beyond Chicago where change of stations is necessary.

For tickets reading to points less than 85 miles beyond Chicago where change of stations is necessary, the charge for transfer services is \$1.00 or less according to destination.

TRAVELERS' CHEQUES—American Express Travelers' Cheques are on sale at principal ticket offices, offering a further convenience to patrons.

THE WESTERN UNION TELEGRAPH COMPANY handles messages at public telegraph offices on the Pennsylvania Railroad. Train and Pullman crews can also provide special blanks and dispatch messages from trains at certain specified waypoints with Western Union charges collected at destination, or billed direct to sender's home or business address at the sender's option.

TRAVELERS AID workers are at many of the railroad stations ready to assist inexperienced and unprotected travelers and all those in trouble away from home. Look for the TRAVELERS AID lamp, or ask station personnel where to find TRAVELERS AID.

BAGGAGE

DEFINITION OF CHECKED BAGGAGE—Wearing apparel, toilet articles (except liquids) and personal effects—necessary or appropriate for the wear, use, comfort and convenience of the passenger for the purpose of his journey and not intended for other persons nor for sale. Money, jewelry, silverware, negotiable papers and like valuables, liquids, fragile or perishable articles, radios and household goods must not be included in checked baggage—the railroads will not be responsible for such articles.

MARKING FOR IDENTIFICATION—Mark or tag each piece with your name and address and place your name and permanent address inside each piece, whether it is checked or carried with you on the train.

BAGGAGE—(Continued)

FORWARDING—Passengers are urged to check baggage in advance so that it may be forwarded on a preceding train. Every effort will be made to facilitate the handling of baggage, but the Railroad cannot guarantee to forward on same train with owner nor the arrival time at destination.

CHECKING ALLOWANCE—One hundred and fifty (150) pounds of baggage not exceeding one hundred (\$100.00) dollars in value may be checked without additional charge for each adult passenger, and seventy-five pounds not exceeding fifty (\$50.00) dollars in value for each child traveling on a one-half fare ticket.

A charge is made for weight over these amounts. Passengers also have the privilege of declaring excess value on their baggage at a nominal charge of twenty cents for each additional \$100.00 or fraction thereof over that allowed on their tickets. Limit of valuation that may be declared by one passenger not to exceed \$2,500.00.

MAXIMUM WEIGHT, SIZE AND LIABILITY—No single piece of baggage exceeding 300 pounds in weight or 72 inches in greatest dimension or single shipment exceeding \$2,500.00 in value, will be checked. Free allowance and liability is subject to tariff stipulation as to contents, weight, value and size.

STORAGE—A charge is made for storage of baggage left at railroad stations longer than the free time limit.

SPECIAL DELIVERY SERVICE—Before starting a trip passengers may telephone the Railway Express Agency or other authorized transfer company to call and pick up baggage and check through to home, hotel, etc., at destination—or if baggage is delivered at station, baggage checkman will on request check through to the local address, making collection of the delivery charge; or if desired, this charge may be paid to the transfer company on delivery at destination.

This service is convenient, relieves you of handling baggage at stations, and for a reasonable charge, places responsibility for the movement of your baggage to and from stations in the hands of an authorized transfer company.

DOGS and other small household pets are transported in baggage cars subject to tariff regulations. Dogs, cats or other animals (not venomous, odoriferous or otherwise objectionable) when carried in baskets or containers, may be taken by purchasers of Pullman private rooms into the rooms they occupy, subject to established regulations. Dogs may be on leash and muzzled instead of in containers.

SPECIAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR CHECKING HAND-BAGS

At Chicago—Passengers holding through tickets may on arrival in Chicago, deliver their hand baggage to Parmelee Company's Agent and secure claim check. The baggage will be transferred to the parcel room of station from which departure will be made and will be available on presentation of the claim check, if they have not less than three hours between trains. On presentation of transfer coupon, the parcel check room fee per piece applying at station to which luggage is sent will be collected.

Bags will also be checked and delivered by The Parmelee Company to any home, hotel, club or office address in Chicago at the regular transfer charge.

Check at Parcel Room of one Philadelphia Station, call for at another Philadelphia Station—Hand baggage may be checked at the Parcel Room at North Philadelphia or Pennsylvania Station (30th St.), and called for at either of these stations. There is no additional charge.

RAILWAY EXPRESS AGENCY—Operates Express Service of the Pennsylvania Railroad. This Agency maintains a unified, nation-wide system for the expedited transportation of shipments.

STATION RESTAURANTS

in Principal Cities on the Pennsylvania Railroad

CITY	STATIONS	BY WHOM OPERATED
Baltimore, Md.	Pennsylvania Station	Union News Company
Chicago, Ill.	Union Station	Fred Harvey
Cincinnati, O.	Union Terminal	Union News Company
Columbus, O.	Union Station	Union News Company
Detroit, Mich.	Fort St. Union Station	Union News Company
Erie, Pa.	Union Station	Union News Company
Harrisburg, Pa.	Pennsylvania Station	Union News Company
Indianapolis, Ind.	Union Station	A. A. Fendrick & Son
Louisville, Ky.	Union Station	Union News Company
Newark, N. J.	Pennsylvania Station	Union News Company
New York City	Pennsylvania Station	The Savarins
Philadelphia, Pa.	North Philadelphia Station	Union News Company
	Pennsylvania Station (30th St.)	Union News Company
	Suburban Station	Union News Company
Pittsburgh, Pa.	Pennsylvania Station	Union News Company
St. Louis, Mo.	Union Station	Fred Harvey
Washington, D. C.	Union Station	Union News Company