Beat: Travel

U.S. Customs And Border Protection

New Rules For Train/Bus Cross Border

Halifax, Nova Scotia, 25.10.2026, 09:14 Time

Brian MacKenzie Teepell/USPA 24 News - U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) has proposed a rule that could deny cross-border rail passengers boarding before the train even leaves the station. In addition, CBP says it's drafting a plan to expand its authority over cross-border bus carriers.

The proposal comes roughly a month after an Appeals Court panel ruled that CBP officers at ports of entry and airports can search traveler's phones without a warrant, probable cause, or reasonable suspicion. Amtrak's Cascades, Adirondack, and its jointly-operated Maple Leaf all provide service between the U.S. and Canada, meaning Canadian passengers on train services that cross into the United States would be subject to the pending rule.

The proposed rule, published in the Federal Register in October, would require rail carriers crossing the U.S. border to report all riders and crew members details to CBP prior to departure. The agency would conduct a review and then may recommend that the company not let flagged travelers board.

The new proposal states,
"If CBP's vetting flags a traveler as having potential security, immigration, customs, or other law enforcement issues, then CBP may recommend that the carrier not board the traveler."

According to the proposal, passenger information would include details found on passports.
"The required information would include information generally found on a passport or other DHS-approved travel document, including name, date of birth, sex, country of citizenship, country of residence, and DHS-approved travel document type, number, country of issuance and expiration date, if applicable."

For years, CBP has had a voluntary program for train companies to submit passenger and crew information before departure; the October proposal would make it mandatory, as it already is for airlines.

A CBP spokesperson told media outlets that the change would allow CBP to "target high-risk travelers while facilitating the processing of legitimate travelers. The proposal is open for public comment, until December 14th, 2026, allowing rail carriers, industry stakeholders, privacy advocates, and the public to review."

Article online:
https://www.uspa24.com/bericht-27329/u-s-customs-and-border-protection.html

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