



States for Passenger Rail Coalition Applauds President Obama For Historic Commitment to Passenger Rail Expansion

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WASHINGTON, DC-- The States for Passenger Rail Coalition (www.s4prc.org) applauds President Obama for his leadership in committing \$8 billion to passenger rail expansion in America, as outlined in this week's State of the Union address.

The \$8 billion in grant awards-- strongly supported by the coalition-- will go to projects in 31 states and 13 corridors.

"President Obama made transportation history with this bold new announcement," Frank Busalacchi, chair of the coalition, said today. Busalacchi also is Wisconsin Secretary of Transportation.

"We have come to a critical point in the expansion of our nation's transportation system where we realize that present and future demands will only be met by using all transportation modes," Busalacchi said. "But for years, rail was underutilized as highways became more crowded and airline delays mounted. This announcement is a big step toward creating a more balanced transportation system for our nation's future."

The rail expansion is expected to contribute to a stronger economy, as investments in rail create many new, good paying jobs. Furthermore, the expansion will contribute to a cleaner environment and help move America to greater energy independence.

While the president's commitment is seen as a bold and commendable new start, coalition members are mindful of the enormity of the overall effort to rebuild America's passenger rail system, an expansion expected to require \$60 billion in new funding.

The coalition remains committed to working with all stakeholders to identify dedicated funding sources for the entire rail system.

The States for Passenger Rail Coalition was formed in 2000 to advocate for increased federal support for intercity passenger rail service, and has 31 state departments of transportation in its membership.

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