



Job Creation Is Top Priority

**Coalition Sees Unprecedented Benefit
In Stimulus Funds for Passenger Rail projects**

Date: March 17, 2009

Inquiries To: John Boffa
Boffa and Associates
(202) 234-5758
Randy Wade
(608) 516-6382

WASHINGTON, DC — With \$8 billion in federal stimulus money allocated for passenger rail projects, the States for Passenger Rail Coalition foresees the beginning of a new era of expanded intercity passenger rail service throughout America. The projects will expand and enhance passenger rail service in multiple ways, while creating thousands of new, good-paying jobs across the nation.

In addition, President Obama has indicated that another \$5 billion can be expected over the next five years, from the administration's proposed transportation budget.

“The creation of good-paying jobs is a major goal in this national recession,” Frank Busalacchi, coalition chair, said. “Additionally, the public demand for expanded passenger rail service is high, and our goal is to meet that demand as quickly as we can. I

applaud Congress and the Obama administration for creating this significant pool of important, new funding.”

The coalition, formed in 2000, has grown to include 31 states and two public authorities. At least 35 states are developing plans for expansion of services or new services.

-2-

The projects identified by state coalition members are spread out geographically, bringing a significant number of new jobs to many regions.

The projects will also draw on a wide range of labor categories, and will provide operational and capacity benefits to passenger and freight operations. Proposed projects include:

- Track improvements, such as double tracking, welded rail and tie replacement to increase capacity and reliability;
- Sidings to allow fast passenger trains and slower freight trains to pass each other.
- Universal crossovers to provide capacity for shared-use corridor passenger and freight operations.
- Grade crossing improvements such as gates and lights.
- Advanced signal and train control systems to increase safety and operational efficiency of both passenger and freight rail operations.
- Station improvements.
- Equipment rehabilitation and acquisition.

“These projects require not only a large number of workers, but call on a wide range of skills,” Chairman Busalacchi said. “They will put people to work, and create significant improvements in passenger and freight operations across America.”

Busalacchi also is secretary of the Wisconsin Department of Transportation, and was a Congressional appointee to the National Surface Transportation Policy and Revenue Study Commission.

##