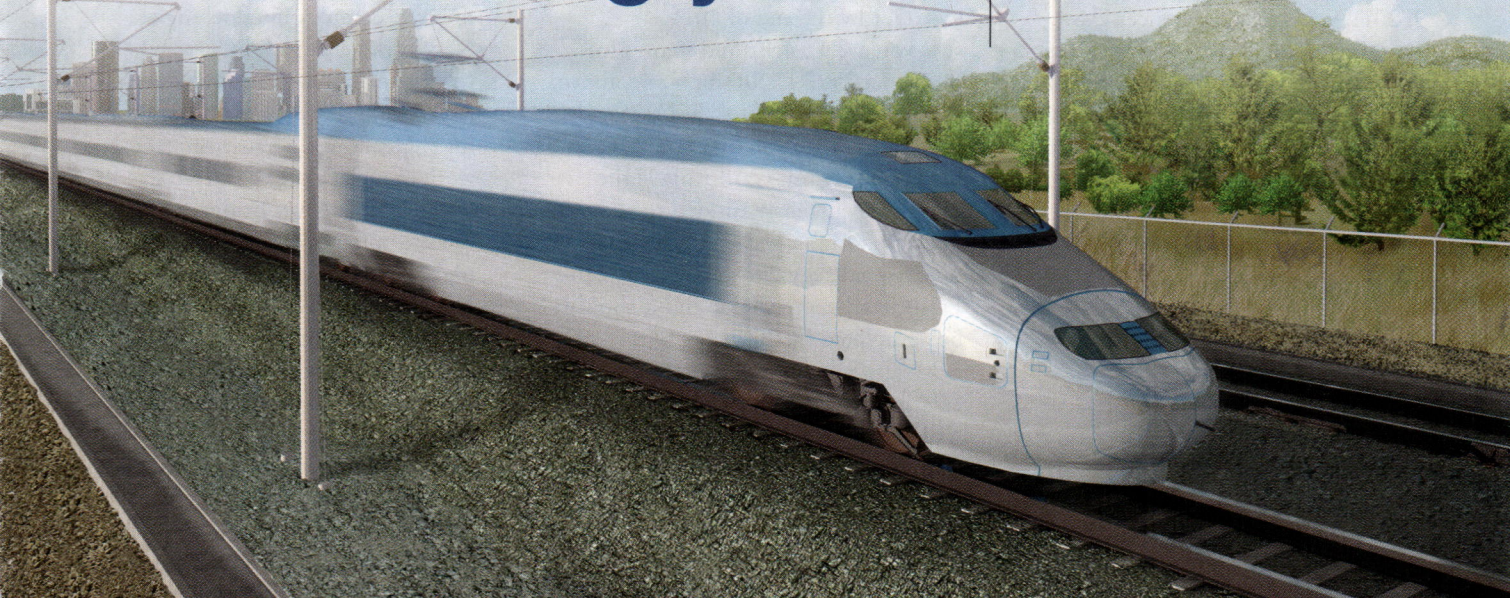


## Fast times in the switching yard

13 programs advance in 32 states; California in the lead



Thirty-nine states have submitted some 500 applications requesting more than \$75 billion in funding since the FRA launched the stimulus application process in 2009. © Jeff Grunewald, illustration courtesy of HNTB.

**T**he demise of U.S. high-speed rail has been greatly exaggerated.

With more than \$10 billion in appropriations since 2009 and 32 states and the District of Columbia advancing 13 different projects, American high-speed rail is on track and scheduled to yield its first fruits as early as 2012.

It will be a bumpy road. It will be a long road. And it will be different from the European or Asian systems, but, yes, America will have high-speed rail. In fact, demand for funding—greater than at any other time in modern U.S. history—is far exceeding supply. Thirty-nine states have submitted some 500 applications requesting more than \$75 billion in funding since the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) launched the stimulus application

process in 2009.

Today, 13 high-speed and intercity passenger rail programs in 32 states and the District of Columbia are moving forward. Federal and state matching funds are being used to plan systems, perform environmental and engineering work, increase existing passenger rail train speeds and break ground on true high-speed rail tracks.

So, why are some saying U.S. high-speed rail is dead?

monies and eliminated \$1 billion appropriated in 2011 high-speed rail funding. These high-profile events prompted opponents to declare high-speed rail had met an early demise. The truth is these cuts are neither devastating nor do they signal the end of high-speed rail in America.

In May 2011, the U.S. DOT redistributed to 15 states and Amtrak the \$2 billion that Florida, Wisconsin and Ohio declined. Twenty-four

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The U.S. has less than 3,100 miles of railways in operation or in the planning stages that are or will be capable of running at a speed of at least 155 mph compared with about 7,500 miles in Europe and more than 10,600 miles in Asia.

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### Still on the rails

Progress doesn't follow a linear path. Its trajectory has peaks and valleys. This year, Ohio, Wisconsin and Florida returned federal high-speed rail monies. And Congress rescinded \$400 million of 2010 unallocated

governors—12 Democrats, 11 Republicans and one Independent—applied for that money. In all, the FRA received 100 applications totaling \$10 billion, sending a clear message to Congress that the majority of states want high-speed rail.