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Secretary LaHood Announces \$179 Million to California for Continued Development of Integrated, Statewide Passenger Rail Network



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\$86 Million Will Extend High-Speed Rail Service Along Central Valley Segment, the Backbone of the Los Angeles to San Francisco Corridor

WASHINGTON – U.S. Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood today announced \$179 million for the State of California to continue building a statewide, passenger rail network with both high-speed and intercity service. Funding will kick-start several major projects throughout the state including the construction of new tracks, the purchase of next generation trains and the installation of high-tech signaling systems.

“California voters and train passengers have said it loud and clear, they want access to a world-class rail system in California,” said Secretary LaHood. “These projects ensure passenger rail is built to support a thriving California economy in the 21st century, while creating thousands of new construction and manufacturing jobs today.”

Through federal investments and voter-approved state investments, California is laying the groundwork for the nation’s first 220 mph high-speed rail system that will deliver sub-two hour trip times to Los Angeles and the Bay Area. The rail dollars will also be used to improve existing intercity service throughout the state, including the acquisition of new trains.

“With 20 million more people expected to be in California within the next 40 years, we can’t build enough highways and airport runways to accommodate the demand,” said Federal Railroad Administrator Joseph C. Szabo. “Passenger rail will play a much greater role in how Californians move throughout the state to ensure California’s economy keeps moving forward.”

Californians are already seeking convenient alternatives to high gas prices and congested highways, as the state currently boasts some of the busiest rail corridors in the nation. The Pacific Surfliner has the 2nd highest ridership figures in the nation, and the Capitol Corridor had more than 1.5 million riders in 2010. Highlights of today’s announcement include:

Central Valley High-Speed Rail

- The California High-Speed Rail Authority will receive \$86.4 million for the Central Valley project, extending the current 110 mile segment an additional 20 miles to Merced and Bakersfield, advancing completion of the backbone of the Los Angeles to San Francisco corridor.

Regional Equipment Pool

- Caltrans will receive \$68 million for new trains servicing intercity routes. The funding is part of a multi-state procurement between California, Michigan, Iowa, Illinois, Missouri and Washington State to pool resources, maximizing the purchase of next-generation American-made trains. Along with \$100 million from a previously awarded grant to California, the money will allow for the purchase six new locomotives and forty new passenger cars.

Pacific Surfliner – San Diego to San Luis Obispo

- Signaling/Safety - Positive train control (PTC) will be installed between San Onofre and San Diego. This signaling system will increase railroad safety and efficiency by monitoring and controlling train movements. Over \$24.9 million was awarded to Caltrans to install the system.

A strict “Buy America” requirement for high-speed rail projects ensures that U.S. manufacturers and workers will receive the maximum economic benefits from this federal investment. In 2009, Secretary LaHood secured a commitment from 30 foreign and domestic rail manufacturers to employ American workers and locate or expand their base of operations in the U.S. if they are selected for high-speed-rail contracts.

Thirty-two states across the U.S. and the District of Columbia are currently laying the foundation for high-speed rail corridors to link Americans with faster and more energy-efficient travel options. The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act and annual appropriations have provided \$10.1 billion to put America on track towards providing new and expanded rail access to communities and improving the reliability, speed, and frequency of existing service. Of that, more than \$6 billion has been obligated to date.