Ohio seeks federal funding for 3-C Corridor startup

With the approval of the Ohio General Assembly, the Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) and the Ohio Rail Development Commission (ORDC) are submitting the initial paperwork to the U.S. Department of Transportation to secure a large amount of federal dollars, likely in the hundreds of millions, for passenger rail development in the state.

This isn't for feasibility studies. It's not for planning. It's to add tracks, upgrade signal systems and build or rebuild stations. In other words, it's to run trains.

Most if not all of the funding sought by Ohio will likely go to the startup of basic Amtrak service in the Cleveland - Columbus - Dayton - Cincinnati (3-C) Corridor. The exact amount of the state's funding request isn't known since Amtrak's 3-C implementation study won't be finished until late summer. Meanwhile cities such as Akron, Cincinnati, Toledo and Youngstown are making their own requests for federal dollars to build or rebuild stations and tracks to restore or improve passenger rail service to their communities.

"We've persevered and worked hard for this day," said All Aboard Ohio Executive Director Ken Prendergast. "While we're very hopeful, there is still a lot of hard work left to do. We've been close to our goal too many times before. I ask our members, contributors and friends to keep working and supporting All Aboard Ohio so we can all see this dream a reality."
Can the election of President Barack Obama finally bring change to America’s passenger rail policies? So far, the early indications are that “Yes he can!” In just the first two months of his administration, nearly as much federal capital improvement funding ($9.3 billion from the stimulus) has been approved for passenger rail as in the first 30 years of Amtrak ($9.8 billion). That doesn’t include another $5 billion pledged by the Obama Administration for passenger rail over the next five years.

It’s well known that Ohio has a lot of catching up to do with other states when it comes to passenger rail development, especially since Ohio is the most densely populated state without a passenger rail investment program. But the availability of federal funding, along with a rail-friendly Gov. Ted Strickland and Ohio Department of Transportation Director Jolene Molitoris could soon mean good things for passenger rail here. Supporting passenger rail are Ohio mayors, city councils, county commissions, congresspersons, businesses, the Ohio AARP, environmental organizations, professional sports teams and, of course, All Aboard Ohio!

Federal funds will speed up rail plans

By Ken Prendergast
Executive Director, All Aboard Ohio

Since last autumn, the federal government’s passenger rail policies have gone from being hazy and irrelevant to a significant and powerful source of change in America’s transportation system.

How the change grew so much so quickly is a fascinating story of seeds being planted for three decades in increasingly fertile soil until a horrible tragedy and some good timing all came together. Indeed, the change has been breathtaking.

As with every other mode of transportation, interest in their growth and expansion has percolated up from local and state governments until the federal government could no longer ignore it. Then, ultimately, the federal government embraced the change and coordinated the scattered approaches of pursuing road, aviation and public transit improvements. It then took the investment and expansion to another level by adding to the mix a significant funding share for a project’s cost.

The same evolution is happening with intercity passenger rail service. Some local and state governments have been investing in better passenger rail service for 30 years. California was one of the earliest to get into the game by sprucing up existing Amtrak services in its state. It improved and expanded services to the point that a dozen Amtrak trains now travel daily through the San Joaquin valley, two dozen daily trains link major cities in southern California and more than three dozen trains a day connect the Bay Area to Sacramento.

As the ridership grew in California, so did the political constituency for passenger trains. It grew so large that elected officials felt comfortable in doing some heavy political lifting to put a $10 billion bond issue on the November 2008 ballot to pay one-fourth the cost of building a high-speed rail system between Los Angeles and San Francisco. In the past, voters were unfamiliar with...
Ohio Passenger Rail News

Train of Thought
from Executive Director Ken Prendergast

I would like to introduce myself. My name is Ken Prendergast and I’m All Aboard Ohio’s new executive director. OK, many of you already know me as I’ve been kicking around these parts since I joined the association in 1984 at the tender age of 17.

But a financial crunch in our association forced the board of directors to lay off my predecessor, Andrew Bremer. Fortunately, he quickly found new employment. He is now a legislative assistant in the Ohio House of Representatives. As director of research and communications, I was still under contract to All Aboard Ohio and still had a small amount of grant funding committed to my activities. So I took on the role of interim executive director at no additional expense to the association.

But I also had a full-time job as a staff writer at Sun Newspapers in Cleveland. Juggling the two jobs became increasingly troublesome. I found myself taking weekend vacations from Sun to work at home and get caught up on All Aboard Ohio activities. Each time I returned to work at Sun, All Aboard Ohio work followed me there and in greater abundance than before.

I was soon doing more All Aboard Ohio work while at Sun than I was writing news for Sun. It was clear where I was needed the most, but All Aboard Ohio didn’t have the money to hire me. Perhaps it was destiny which intervened, as All Aboard Ohio President Bill Hutchison wrote in his column. Funding arrived and I quit Sun Newspapers after working there for 15 years.

It’s a good start and I thank all the contributors, Duke Energy, 10 Cleveland City Council members led by Brian Cummins, and an anonymous citizen. I also thank our legislative summit sponsors AECOM, LTK Engineering and URS Consultants (see back page for summit details).

I am also grateful to Cleveland Mayor Frank Jackson’s staff who told me about the Cleveland Executive Fellowship (CEF). And I am thankful to CEF for placing Jenita McGowan with All Aboard Ohio. She served as our communications director during a very busy and exciting time as the 3-C Corridor debate came to the Ohio General Assembly. We also have an accomplished new webmaster in James Cutietta.

All Aboard Ohio Secretary Jack Shaner, whose employer is the Ohio Environmental Council (OEC), has been a huge help. We’ve traded text messages, e-mails and phone calls while he attended legislative hearings that sometimes continued after midnight to address legislative situations as they arose. OEC is one of the many partnerships we’ve solidified in recent months to expand All Aboard Ohio’s reach.

Another longtime friend re-emerged – Tom Norwalk of Dayton, who has many political contacts in Southwest Ohio. He has been a valuable person in a part of the state I’m physically farthest from. And since I’m up in Cleveland, the mostly volunteer work of part-time office assistant Valerie Selig at All Aboard Ohio’s Columbus office has been valuable in tackling our database and mailings.

Statement of Purpose

All Aboard Ohio is a non-profit, member-based organization dedicated to promoting improved public transportation and passenger rail service throughout the state.

Our mission is to achieve for the citizens of Ohio a modern, consumer-focused, statewide passenger transportation network that provides people with real travel choices they want and can use.

All Aboard Ohio exists to increase public awareness of the need to improve and increase safe and efficient intercity passenger rail and local public transportation service in Ohio and throughout the United States; to support and conduct non-partisan research, educational and informational activities; to provide research and information to foundations and corporate giving programs about the mobility needs of Ohioans; to sponsor reports, meetings and workshops; to sponsor other services to strengthen the stability of existing rail passenger and public transportation providers; and to educate the public about the use, benefits and investments required to improve and increase safe and efficient passenger ground transportation.
WANTED

Photos and Articles

Clippings from newspapers and magazines must include the publication's name and date. Your articles and news briefs should be typed and double-spaced, though very short items may be legibly written. Preferably, send hard copy with IBM-compatible text files on CDs, or send e-mail submissions to:

kjprendergast@cox.net

We reserve the right to edit all non-published submissions. Original photos should be sharp, bright prints—avoid negatives.

Always include your name and phone number!

Editor, Ohio Passenger Rail News
12029 Clifton Boulevard, #505
Lakewood OH 44107-2189

The Ohio Association of Railroad Passengers (dba All Aboard Ohio) is incorporated in Ohio as a non-profit association and exempt from federal income tax under the IRS Code, Section 501(c)(3) as a publicly supported educational organization. Dues and donations may be tax-deductible in accordance with the IRS Code.

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Columbus, OH 43215-5428

An introductory one-year membership in All Aboard Ohio includes a subscription to the Ohio Passenger Rail News, plus action alerts, notice of rail-oriented events, and local meetings. (Dues and contributions to All Aboard Ohio may be tax deductible.)
Ohio seeks federal funding for 3-C Corridor startup

“Startup” from page one

stimulus was specified by the Ohio General Assembly because theARRA requires departments of transportation to get approval from state legislatures before making stimulus funding requests.

Other state requests for federal funds, such as from the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) passenger rail capital investment program, do not require general assembly approval. But while the FRA’s passenger rail program requires a state or local funding match, the stimulus dollars don’t. It can be 100 percent federal — assuming there’s enough money to go around.

The $8 billion in the stimulus’s competitive grant program for passenger rail (plus another $1.3 billion in non-competitive “state of good repair” stimulus funding for Amtrak) sounds like a lot of money. But the entire $8 billion could easily be eaten up by Amtrak’s Northeast Corridor just to bring it up to good condition (see “Federal funds will speed up rail plans” starting on Page One).

Therefore, early applicants will have the best shot at funding. So will those with projects which have the greatest impact on things like short-term job creation, long-term economic development, ridership, cost-effectiveness, travel time and other factors.

The 3-C Corridor will have to compete nationally with other projects, big and small. But its prospects might be good based on all those studies Ohio and Amtrak have done in the past.

One of them, a national study done in 1990 by Amtrak and bearing the arcane title “Service to Areas Not Presently Served” said the 3-C Corridor was the nation’s second-most promising travel corridor which Amtrak didn’t yet serve. The number-one corridor was Florida to New Orleans. With financial help from Florida, Amtrak extended its Sunset Limited east of New Orleans which continued until Hurricane Katrina wiped out many bridges. Ohio never acted on that report or any other study — until now.

Another factor in the 3-C Corridor’s favor is population density. Ohio is the ninth-most densely populated state in the union and the most populous without a state-supported passenger rail program. The top eight states and the next eight below Ohio (except Hawaii) all have passenger rail programs, be they for Amtrak or regional/commuter rail services between cities. And, along the 3-C Corridor’s 260-mile rail corridor live 5.6 million people. In fact, the population within 15 miles of the 3-C Corridor’s tracks is larger than the entire populations of 30 states.

But stimulus funding will flow to passenger rail projects elsewhere in Ohio, too. How do we know? Because it’s already happening. The first passenger rail project to receive federal stimulus money was actually a transit project.

The Lorain County Transportation Center — Elyria’s former New York Central Depot — received $3.6 million in stimulus funds to renovate the downtown facility into offices and bus transit hub for Lorain County Transit. The LCTC would also be a station for Greyhound buses and Amtrak trains.

The stimulus funding will pay for two phases of reconstruction including interior renovations and site improvements. Lorain County officials have asked Amtrak to provide another $1.7 million, possibly through stimulus money, to add train station facilities to the LCTC. Amtrak currently stops at a tiny station east of downtown.

Other cities have also requested stimulus funds. Youngstown has requested $30 million to reopen the Cleveland – Youngstown – Pittsburgh (CYP) route for passenger trains. That includes $10 million to restore the Ravenna Connection track between the Norfolk Southern and CSX mainlines, as well as put a basic station facility on it. Another $15 million would be for track improvements in Youngstown so the train station could be located near downtown’s new Chevrolet Centre arena. The remaining $5 million would be for stations, track improvements or contingencies along the entire CYP Corridor.

Also, the cities of Akron and Cincinnati have each requested $15 million for passenger rail stations. Akron would add train station facilities to its new intermodal transit center located between downtown and the University of Akron. The station could be used by Cuyahoga Valley Scenic Railroad trains or by 3-C Corridor trains routed through Akron.

Meanwhile Cincinnati wants to build a train station for 3-C Corridor trains in the Longworth Hall area, west of Paul Brown Stadium. The site is closer to downtown than Union Terminal which is hemmed in by Queensgate Yard and has little room for future expansion. Longworth Hall was chosen several years ago by city-hired consultants as the best site for a future passenger train station.

Although officials in Toledo haven’t submitted a stimulus request for a passenger rail project, All Aboard Ohio has been assisting local officials to select near-term improvements which could be funded by stimulus dollars. Such improvements could include track and Amtrak facility investments to restore Toledo’s MLK Plaza as a multi-track station. Only one track is usable at Toledo’s station today. There also is local interest in other capacity enhancement projects like adding passing sidings to Norfolk Southern’s busy Toledo – Cleveland mainline.

Ohio rail plans, coalition gain momentum

Once upon a time, there was this lone voice in the wilderness. It was the voice of All Aboard Ohio. Anyone could tell whose voice it was because it actively called for passenger rail development in Ohio. That voice is now the General Assembly and to overcome a core group of legislators staunchly opposed to the state investing in passenger rail.

» ODOT has a director who believes passenger rail
Once upon a time, there was this lone voice in the wilderness. It was the voice of All Aboard Ohio. Anyone could tell whose voice it was because it actively called for passenger rail development in Ohio.

Today, the nonprofit advocacy association is happy to be part of a large chorus whose numbers continue to grow, yet they're still singing the same tune. And, even though All Aboard Ohio is just one voice, it's still respected because it has been there before – more times than its long-time members sometimes care to count. That's why governor's aides, transportation department officials, state senators and representatives, mayors and business leaders regularly contact All Aboard Ohio staff for advice and information on how to refine their messages.

"All Aboard Ohio has kept the pilot light on these many years until others were ready to join in," said Assistant Board Member Hunter Morrison, director of campus planning and community partnerships at Youngstown State University. "That time has arrived."

Such a growing and well-tuned chorus has brought the State of Ohio to a point where it has never been in the 35-year existence of the Ohio Association of Railroad Passengers, which has been doing business as All Aboard Ohio since 2005. Consider that:

- Ohio has a governor who has done more than just say nice things about passenger rail. Instead, Gov. Ted Strickland has instructed his staff to devote significant time to win over some rail skeptics in the General Assembly and to overcome a core group of legislators staunchly opposed to the state investing in passenger rail.
- ODOT has a director who believes passenger rail service is an essential part of bringing a multi-modal transportation system to Ohio. Jolene Molitoris, like Gov. Strickland, has also committed significant personal and staff time to passenger rail development. Mrs. Molitoris was also an All Aboard Ohio board member before she joined Strickland's team.
- Ohio has a Congressional delegation in which 16 of its 20 members, including both U.S. Senators, have announced their support for the start-up of 3-C Corridor passenger trains. Some congresspersons have contacted Gov. Strickland asking how they can help get the trains running.
- Mayors in every principal city in Ohio have written to Governor Strickland and/or the Ohio General Assembly in the past year to support passenger rail development statewide. That includes the mayors of Akron, Canton, Cincinnati, Cleveland, Columbus, Dayton, Lima, Mansfield, Springfield, Toledo and Youngstown. Mayors in smaller cities like Berea, Brook Park, Bryan, Delaware, Galion, Ravenna and Riverside are on record as wanting the state to take the lead on developing passenger rail.
- City councils in many of those same cities have also backed passenger rail, as have the county commissioners in Cuyahoga, Franklin, Hamilton, Lorain and Montgomery counties.
- Presidents of most of the major universities in Ohio have contacted Governor Strickland and/or the Ohio General Assembly asking for 3-C Corridor and other passenger rail services.
- In addition to All Aboard Ohio's 2,000 stakeholders (paid members and those who requested to be on its e-mail news distribution list), Ohio grassroots organizations with more than 2 million members asked state officials to pursue passenger rail development. Some of the largest membership organizations include the AARP-Ohio, Policy Matters Ohio, the Ohio Public Interest Research Group, Ohio Sierra Club and United Transportation Union. According to the governor's office, members of those organizations flooded the Ohio General Assembly with 15,000 pro-rail calls and e-mails in just a few days in March.
- Increasing numbers of professional sports teams in Ohio are backing passenger rail development. Supporters include the Cincinnati Bengals, Cleveland Cavaliers, Columbus Blue Jackets, Columbus Clippers and the Columbus Crew. "In addition to important job-creating benefits," Gov. Strickland said, "passenger rail will also provide more Ohioans with a practical and safe transportation alternative to enjoy Ohio's world-class professional athletics."
- And, last but not least, a Quinnipiac University poll released in March 2009 showed that 64 percent of Ohio's voters supported Gov. Strickland's efforts to develop passenger rail in Ohio's 3-C Corridor. That included 56 percent of Republicans, while only 38 percent opposed it. Even though the poll was statewide and that many Ohioans have never seen a passenger train before, 46 percent said it was likely they would use 3-C Corridor passenger trains.

"This is the kind of groundswell of support we used to envy in other states," said Ken Prendergast, executive director of All Aboard Ohio. "It's also the kind of groundswell other states saw right before they got passenger rail service."
"We actually get two wins" because federal money can be used to improve existing freight rail lines and crossings. If passenger service doesn't materialize, Seitz said, "We're still going to have an upgraded freight rail system."

— State Sen. Bill Seitz (R) Green Township, Cincinnati Enquirer, March 18, 2009

"Columbus is the largest city in the nation without rail. Those cities that don't focus in on alternative forms of transportation are those cities that will fall behind."


"Passenger rail is another mobility option for midlife and older people who travel both within congested regional corridors and between cities separated by long distances. ...In addition passenger rail provides essential service to many rural communities, and it is an alternative to air travel in the more congested corridors, such as the Northeast."

— Bill Sundermeyer, Associate State Director for Advocacy for AARP Ohio, in testimony before the Ohio Senate Highways and Transportation Committee, March 18, 2009

"The truth is that a rail proposal linking Ohio's largest cities and population centers is exactly the sort of stimulus envi-

SANDUSKY: Realign NS Sandusky Line, add 2nd platform, overhead walkway to expand capacity of NS mainline: $5M

TOLEDO: Cosmetic improvements, restore 2nd track at station to expand capacity of NS RR: $3M

BRYAN: Spread NS main tracks, add platform between them to expand capacity of NS RR: $3M
"The truth is that a rail proposal linking Ohio's largest cities and population centers is exactly the sort of stimulus envisioned by the federal legislation. Not only would it generate construction jobs for the (station) platform and rail upgrades, but it also would bring more people into Ohio's larger and mid-sized cities to spend their money. And a side benefit would be the boost to freight-rail efficiency from track upgrades in a state where freight rail accounts for thousands of jobs."

— Cleveland Plain Dealer, staff editorial, March 23, 2009.

“It is apparent that the Ohio Contractors Association, which represents the highway-contracting industry and lobbies for increasing gasoline taxes, has been feeding at the highway-funding trough for so long that it believes that our gasoline taxes are an ever-expanding entitlement program for its own benefit.”

— All Aboard Ohio Executive Director Ken Prendergast, letter to editor of Columbus Dispatch, March 21, 2009.

“Every passenger-rail service system in the world relies on subsidies. We subsidize our highways and airports more than we subsidize Amtrak. So let's get something straight here. Amtrak has not been at the trough.”

— Vice President Joe Biden, March 13, 2009.

“My mother-in-law lives in Cleveland, and anything that would make it easier for her to visit I am STRONGLY opposed.”


DAYTON: Build station downtown at/near the transportation and convention centers: $3M

CINCINNATI: Build transit center west of Paul Brown Stadium, per a recent city study: $15M

SPRINGFIELD: Build bus-rail transit station downtown: $2M

Up to 80 percent of 3-C Corridor can

GRADE X-ING SAFETY: Add signage, barriers, seek Quiet Zones.

ADDED CAPACITY: Construct passing sidings, main tracks to keep freight & passenger rail traffic fluid.
ELYRIA: $3.3 million stimulus funds committed to renovation of NYC Depot into Lorain County Transportation Center for bus and rail services.

CLEVELAND: Construct North Coast Transportation Center north of the convention center: $50M

Ohio’s manufacturing, industrial future:
Can closed auto plants re-tool for passenger rail cars?

By Jenita McGowan
Communications Director, All Aboard Ohio

Jim Wellman, deputy mayor of Riverside, has a vision for General Motors' recently closed Moraine Assembly Plant located just south of Dayton. His concept is to re-tool the Moraine Assembly from sport utility vehicles to passenger rail cars.

Mr. Wellman was a conductor for CSX Railroad for 37 years before becoming Deputy Mayor of Riverside on the east side of Dayton. He also was appointed to an at-large seat on the All Aboard Ohio board of directors at the end of last year.

“It would be a great location to build, re-build and renovate passenger rail cars,” he said.

The Moraine plant is already accessible by rail and once made the Chevrolet Trail Blazer, GMC Envoy, Isuzu Ascender and the Saab 9-7x vehicles. The plant closed in December 2008. The nearby Dayton-Phoenix Group builds locomotive motors. Wellman sees the potential for the country’s only passenger rail car manufacturer to be located in Dayton.

According to the federal passenger rail stimulus funding stipulations, all the money must be spent inside the United States before 2012. This stipulation may create a shortage of rail cars for new passenger rail lines being built and supplied with stimulus funds.

“There is no one building passenger rails in this country. You have to go to Germany, France or Japan to purchase them,” Mr. Wellman said. “There is going to be a tremendous shortage of cars, unless someone gets on the ball.”
capital improvements may be for:

**GALION:*** Add platform, walkways, track to Big Four Depot: $6M

**COLUMBUS:*** Build multi-modal transit center in downtown area: $5M

**YOUNGSTOWN:*** Build station, tracks downtown near Chevrolet Centre arena: $15M

**RAVENNA:*** Restore connecting track, station to re-open direct Cleveland-Youngstown rail services: $10M

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**SAFER SIGNALS:** Add PTC on 3-C Corridor five years ahead of federal mandate.

**FREIGHT GROWTH:** 3-C Corridor improvements will allow for rail traffic growth.

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Reopening closed Ohio auto plants is the goal of All Aboard Ohio At-Large Director Jim Wellman and others. The deputy mayor of Riverside, near Dayton, said the closed Moraine General Motors plant (pictured) or the nearby Delphi brake plant could be used to make passenger train equipment or components to meet “Buy American” provisions in the federal stimulus.
All Aboard Ohio’s President

Are the stars aligning?

By Bill Hutchison
President, All Aboard Ohio

We’ve been on quite a ride recently, haven’t we? Who would have thought that we’d be so far along with the Cleveland – Columbus – Dayton – Cincinnati (3-C) Corridor passenger rail proposal, especially in the face of some pretty tough opposition. It seems every day brings more supporters and more endorsements from key players. Some of us feel like squinting moles dragged into the sunlight, saying “What’s going on? How did this happen all these years?”

Last fall, nobody would have guessed we’d be where are now. We were in a state of disarray and on the brink of financial collapse and some were probably thinking, or wishing we’d fold. However, adversity breeds triumph. We pulled together and pitched in and righted ourselves when we could have easily given up.

However, the best was yet to come and some interesting events started to take place. President Barack Obama was elected and not more than 30 days later we had $9 billion for intercity rail in the stimulus bill. The next thing we know, Gov. Ted Strickland makes the 3-C Corridor a major policy initiative. Imagine that: A president AND a governor who gets it! Unbelievable.

So now we had something to rally around, but then some interesting coincidences started to happen. It started on a small scale when one day our old copier started to die and the very next day we received a phone call from the Columbus Bar Association. “We happen to have a copier we no longer need and we wonder if you’d be interested in it?” “Why, yes, of course!” We gasped. Well, it turns out this thing is a monster and can do anything imaginable. It probably makes coffee, too. It was an interesting coincidence, no doubt, but not earth-shaking.

The second incident really had us abuzz. Ken Prendergast, tired of working for Sun Newspapers and wanting to get into the fight for rail passenger service made an offer to quit the newspaper and go to work for All Aboard Ohio full-time. The very next day we got word that Duke Energy was going make a substantial donation to us and that was promptly matched by another party! These donations are what enabled us to bring on Ken and how timely it was.

Yet another bit of good news came when the Cleveland Executive Fellowship offered a skilled, enthusiastic rail advocate to work full-time for All Aboard Ohio for six weeks at no expense to us! Jenita McGowan came to All Aboard Ohio in late February - at exactly the right time to help Ken conduct educational outreach, activate local officials along the 3-C Corridor and meet with state officials in Columbus. Coincidence? Fate? Who knows?

From that moment on, even more things began to happen that had us convinced that the idea of rail passenger service might just be an idea whose time has come. The usual supporters were rallying to the cause, but they were really excited and that translated into a willingness to work hard. Other groups voiced their support as well, including some old friends and a lot of new allies, who seemed to pop out of nowhere.

Things seem to have hit a critical mass. When opposition by some legislators led to an avalanche of phone calls and emails, even more supporters came forward and that trend continues to this day. Suddenly, the idea of 3-C Corridor and rail passenger service in Ohio as a whole has “legs”, as they say.

But think again about what made this possible. If President Obama or Gov. Strickland hadn’t been elected, rail passenger service in Ohio would have continued to just be a dream. Even more so, had we not gotten the funding to bring Ken on as our executive director, or had he not been available, we would not have been in a position to press the issue.

People are ready to get on the train, but it took some pretty amazing coincidences to make things happen. As for me, I’m still squinting, but I’m thrilled that a lot of others feel that passenger trains are worth having and are willing to fight for them. I feel we’ve been vindicated, but this fight isn’t over, so let’s roll...on passenger trains!

Federal funds will speed up rail plans

“Funds” from page one trains and turned thumbs down on prior high-speed rail ballot issues. Now more accustomed to trains, voters approved this major initiative.

Other states, from Maine to Washington, were also investing in passenger rail services in bits and pieces and building momentum for ever-larger investments. That’s part of what finally got the Bush Administration to change its view of the benefits of rail and its potential for linking people and places, and it’s a huge part of what convinced the public of rail’s potential as well.

So began the debate over whether the stimulus law required that rail be a component of transportation or state-chartered organizations like rail authorities and compacts of states. There are three eligible uses for passenger rail stimulus funds – high-speed rail development, rail traffic congestion relief and general passenger rail improvements. There are no funding “firewalls” which guarantee amounts for any of the eligible uses. The rail funding has to be obligated to a project by Sept. 30, 2012. That shouldn’t be difficult given the demand for passenger rail projects...

The stimulus law. But passenger rail will have to compete with other transportation projects nationwide including freight rail, public transit, highways, ports and waterways.

Some passenger rail projects won’t make the stimulus cut. There is another option for them, however. President Obama and Secretary LaHood announced that the USDOT will make available $1 billion a year over the next five years for passenger rail development. This will
...that’s part of what finally got the Bush Administration to change its stance in opposing a federal leadership role for passenger rail development. Another factor was the recognition by freight railroads that passenger trains are a magnet for public investment in their ways.

Still another was the deadly Sept. 12, 2008 collision between a commuter train and a freight train in Chatsworth, Calif. It caused the Passenger Rail Investment and Improvement Act (PRIIA) to unite its promised $13 billion worth of capital improvements with another bill languishing in Congress, the Rail Safety Improvement Act. The combined bill was passed just one month after the Chatsworth crash.

For the first time since the railroad came to America 182 years ago, the United States had a federal-state matching capital improvement program for intercity passenger trains. Similar federal-state funding programs had benefited highways, airports, transit and canals for years. As significant a step it was, the legislation only authorized billions of dollars for passenger trains. After authorization, there are two more steps in public finance—appropriation and expenditure.

Along with California’s high-speed rail vote, a majority of the nation’s electorate also cast pro-rail votes in November 2008 whether they realized it or not. Barack Obama and Joe Biden had been touted by the press as the most passenger-rail-friendly administration in a long time to seek the White House. Turns out the train talk wasn’t just campaign rhetoric. President Obama and Vice President Biden chosed staff who were as supportive of trains as they, including White House Chief of Staff Rahm Emanuel and Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood.

As debate over a promised federal economic stimulus bill heated up, Messrs. Emanuel and LaHood, along with key members Congress, worked to get a significant funding boost for passenger rail in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA). All told, there was $9.3 billion in the stimulus for passenger rail, including $450 million for Amtrak security upgrades, $850 million to bring Amtrak up to a state of good repair and $8 billion in competitive passenger rail grants.

There are three entities which can seek the competitive

rail industry companies in Ohio and the region

- ABB Railway, Akron & Cincinnati
- Alstom Transportation, Rochester & Hornell New York
- American & Ohio Locomotive and Crane Co., Bucyrus
- Ametek, Kent
- Caddy Erico Products Inc., Solon
- Cleveland Track Materials, Cleveland
- Clifton Steel Co., Maple Heights
- Columbus Steel Castings Co., Columbus
- Connect Software, Miamisburg
- DA International Casting Co., Mansfield
- Dayton-Phoenix Group, Dayton
- Delta Railroad Construction, Ashtabula
- Fachheimer Brothers, Cincinnati
- General Electric Locomotive, Erie, Pennsylvania
- Herzog Contracting Corp., St. Joseph Missouri
- International Display, Dayton
- Interstate Diesel Service, Inc., Cleveland
- Ohio Railcar Service, Lordstown
- Railtech Boute, Inc., Napoleon
- Robin Industries, Cleveland
- Salient Systems, Dublin
- Seimens, Cleveland & Norwood
- Solutions Plus, Amelia
- Steel City Rail, Inc. Hamilton, Ontario
- Swiger Coil, Cleveland
- Timken, Canton
Thank you, All Aboard Ohio supporters!

Below are some of the foundations, corporations, non-profit organizations, and labor unions that support All Aboard Ohio activities. The support of our corporate sponsors, and of our dues-paying members, allows us to work “for improved public transportation in the state.”
Below are some of the foundations, corporations, non-profit organizations, and labor unions that support All Aboard Ohio activities. The support of our corporate sponsors, and of our dues-paying members, allows us to work “for improved passenger train and transit services in Ohio.”

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Fifth Annual Ohio Rail/Transit Legislative Summit

ALLABOARDOHIO!

Join All Aboard Ohio as it continues to advocate for public transit and passenger rail in Ohio!

Wednesday, April 29 9:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Columbus Downtown YWCA
Huntington Hall
65 South 4th Street
Columbus OH 43215
9:30 a.m. Registration and a light breakfast

Featured Speakers

» Ty Marsh, President and CEO; Columbus Chamber of Commerce and Principal Co-Chair of the ODOT 21st Century Transportation Priorities Task Force. Ty will provide a summary of findings and recommendations of the 21st Century Transportation Priorities Task Force Final Report.

» Joseph Calabrese, General Manager and CEO of the Greater Cleveland RTA; Chair of the Moving People Subcommittee of the ODOT 21st Century Transportation Priorities Task Force. He will outline the Task Force recommendations for public transit and the outlook for the new budget.

» Matt Dietrich, the Executive Director of the Ohio Rail Development Commission, will discuss 3-C Corridor implementation and provide an update on funding for the Ohio & Lake Erie Regional Rail, Ohio Hub Plan, programmatic environmental impact statements.

Luncheon Speaker

» Senator Capri Cafaro (invited); Ohio Senate Minority Leader (For the Rail News column)

Summit Registration Fees:

All Aboard Ohio members: $50
Following the luncheon, Ohio Rail/Transit Legislative Summit attendees will visit Ohio House and Senate offices.

Luncheon Speaker

Senator Capri Cafaro (invited); Ohio Senate Minority Leader (D-Hubbard), will discuss funding strategies for public transportation and passenger rail investments in Ohio and the view from the General Assembly.

Summit Registration Fees:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Fee</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All Aboard Ohio members</td>
<td>$50 ($25 is tax deductible)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>non-members</td>
<td>$75 ($50 is tax deductible)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>seniors/college students</td>
<td>$25</td>
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</tbody>
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The Ohio Association of Railroad Passengers (dba All Aboard Ohio) is incorporated in Ohio as a non-profit association and exempt from federal income tax under the IRS Code, Section 501(c)(3) as a publicly supported educational organization. Dues and donations may be tax-deductible in accordance with the IRS Code.

Please make checks payable to:

“All Aboard Ohio”
309 South 4th Street, Suite 304
Columbus, OH 43215
(614) 228-6005
www.allaboardohio.org

All Aboard Ohio says “Thank-you” to our Ohio Rail/Transit Legislative Summit sponsors:

AECOM  Duke Energy  URS  LTK
LTK Engineering Services

Calendar of Events/Meetings

All meetings are subject to change. We firmly suggest that you confirm dates, times and locations for all meetings.

April 2009

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Contact information</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Ohio Rail Development Comm. Retreat</td>
<td>9:00 am</td>
<td>9466 Columbus Pike, Lewis Center, OH</td>
<td>ORDC 614 / 728-9497</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Toledo Local Meeting</td>
<td>10:00 am</td>
<td>Toledo Amtrak Station, MLK (Central Union) Plaza, Toledo</td>
<td>Bill Gill 419 / 536-1924</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>Ohio Rail/Transit Legislative Summit</td>
<td>9:30 am</td>
<td>Columbus Downtown YWCA, Huntington Hall, 65 S. 4th St., Columbus</td>
<td>216 / 288-4883</td>
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May 2009

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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Toledo Local Meeting</td>
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<td>Toledo Amtrak Station, MLK (Central Union) Plaza, Toledo</td>
<td>Bill Gill 419 / 536-1924</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Ohio Rail Development Comm.</td>
<td>9:00 am</td>
<td>Riffe Center, 77 S. High Street, 31st Floor, South B&amp;C, Columbus</td>
<td>ORDC 614 / 728-9497</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>All Aboard Ohio Annual Meeting</td>
<td>9:30 am</td>
<td>Palmer House, 134 Bushist St., Galion, OH</td>
<td>All Aboard Ohio 614 / 728-9497</td>
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