

RESOLUTION

Supporting stimulus funding for the State of Ohio 3C "Quick Start" Passenger Rail Plan.

WHEREAS, Ohio's 3C "Quick Start" Passenger Rail Plan - connecting Cleveland, Columbus, Dayton, and Cincinnati as part of the nationally-prioritized Chicago Hub in President Obama's *Vision for High Speed Rail in America* - is a strong contender for federal funding through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act.

WHEREAS, Ohioans are demanding safer and greener travel choices, as proven in a March 2009 Quinnipiac University statewide poll which showed that 64% of Ohioans want passenger rail and that among Ohioans 18-35 years old, 73% support the 3C "Quick Start" plan.

WHEREAS, nearly 6 million Ohioans live within 15 miles of the 3C Corridor, a federally designated high speed rail corridor and one of the most densely-populated corridors in the U.S. without passenger rail service.

WHEREAS, Ohio's "Quick Start" plan would have initial conventional-speed service running as early as 2011, using the safest, most efficient and cost-effective route, generating jobs and economic development, and putting travel choice in reach of more than 60% of Ohio's population.

WHEREAS, Ohio's 3C "Quick Start" Service would offer 3-4 trains running daily in each direction, traveling at 79 miles per hour, offering fares and travel times that are competitive with other forms of transportation along this 250-mile corridor, with times constantly improving as tracks are upgraded and freight coordination issues are resolved.

WHEREAS, Ohio's 3C "Quick Start" Plan builds a foundation for economic competitiveness in some of our state's most economically-distressed cities, where these urban cores represent Ohio's centers of commerce, education and research, all of which can be better connected to a ready and mobile workforce with passenger rail.

WHEREAS, train stations are magnets for real estate development, with land values around stations increasing as much as 30%, and station stops provide place-making opportunities by creating comfortable, well-connected, and memorable destinations, which leads to new opportunities for small business growth and vibrant urban cores that are able to attract and retain today's talented professionals.

WHEREAS, Ohio's 3C "Quick Start" Plan will bring new travel opportunities and promote economic development in cities along the rail line by creating jobs, promoting regional connectivity, and creating an infrastructure to help spur greener and safer transportation options, including light rail growth and other connectors, such as green buses and street cars.

WHEREAS, Ohio's 3C "Quick Start" Plan will augment Ohio's existing passenger rail service along the Chicago-Toledo-Cleveland-Pittsburgh and Chicago-Cincinnati corridors, which currently carry three of Amtrak's long-distance trains through Ohio but offer limited service, with trains departing and arriving in the middle of the night.

WHEREAS, the State of Ohio is working with Amtrak to improve this limited service, which saw 121,019 Ohio riders in 2008, up nearly 10% from the prior year.

WHEREAS, Ohio's 3C "Quick Start" Plan will leverage new public-private partnership, such as Amtrak's annual investment of more than \$12.6 million for goods and services in Ohio, from more than a dozen Ohio companies, and Amtrak's direct employment of 56 Ohioans with total annual wages of more than \$3.9 million.

WHEREAS, in addition to expanded passenger rail-related business growth, freight rail operations would benefit from Ohio's 3C "Quick Start" Passenger Rail Plan from increase relief at congested rail choke points, at a value of more than \$3 to \$6 billion in improved productivity.

WHEREAS, Ohioans need greater travel choices and reliable mobility options, as evidenced by data in the U.S. Census showing nearly 8 percent of Ohio households without a motor vehicle, and 20-25 percent of households without cars in Cleveland, Dayton and Cincinnati, and showing that Ohioans age 65 years and older will account for over 16 percent of the total state population by the year 2015 and 20 percent by 2030.

WHEREAS, a modern transportation system that includes passenger rail service enhances the quality of life for those in its proximity, revitalizes our cities and boosts the economic development and growth potential of a region.

WHEREAS, future expansions of Ohio's passenger rail service, beyond start-up levels, may include establishing "local" and "express" train service, opening opportunities for more station stops and increased economic development potential at locations across the state.

WHEREAS, fourteen other states with state-sponsored passenger rail service are already realizing the dramatic economic development potential and return on investment from passenger rail, such as the Downeaster Service which is expected to generate \$3.3 billion in construction investment and create 8,000 new jobs in Maine over the next two decades.

AND WHEREAS, Ohio's 3C "Quick Start" Plan must win federal dollars to go forward and the ORDC and ODOT will formally apply on October 2, 2009, for federal stimulus funding of up to \$400 million under the Recovery Act (ARRA) to invest in infrastructure improvements, station development and operating train sets to initiate service along the 3C Corridor.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of County Commissioners, Cuyahoga County, Ohio that this organization:

- 1. Believes that a modern transportation system that includes passenger rail service will enhance the quality of life for those in its proximity, revitalize our cities and boost the economic development and growth potential of a region.**
- 2. Recognizes that Ohio and the Nation are faced with an array of urgent economic, environmental, and mobility challenges that require bold, effective action to be taken to implement strategic and essential investment in our rail transportation system.**
- 3. Calls for the strong support by the U.S. Department of Transportation and the Federal Rail Administration for the State of Ohio's stimulus funding request for Ohio's 3C "Quick Start" Passenger Rail Plan.**
- 4. Encourages the State of Ohio to pursue the improvement of passenger rail speed in excess of 79 mph on the 3C corridor as soon as practicable so that passenger rail will be perceived as more efficient and convenient than similar travel by auto.**
- 5. Supports the Quick Start passenger rail service in the 3C Corridor as the best available means to the desired end, which is high speed rail service among major mid-western cities.**

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Clerk of the Board be, and she is, hereby instructed to transmit a copy of this resolution to Rick Werner, Deputy County Administrator/Health & Human Services and Paul Oyaski, Director, Department of Development.

On Motion of Commissioner Dimora, seconded by Commissioner Jones, the foregoing resolution was duly adopted.

Ayes: Dimora, Jones, Hagan.

Nays: None.

Resolution Adopted.

**Jeanne M. Schmotzer,
Clerk of the Board**

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