



For Immediate Release
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AASHTO Support for Intercity Passenger Rail Reasserted in Position Paper “Vision Statement” Released as Federal Government Holds First Workshop

(Charlotte, NC)—As the Federal Railroad Administration prepares to lay the groundwork for distributing \$8 billion in economic recovery grant funds for intercity passenger rail, state transportation officials have outlined an action plan for delivering a “robust intercity passenger rail network.”

The report, “*Achieving the Vision: Intercity Passenger Rail*” was released by the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials today in Charlotte, at the first of seven regional workshops being held by the FRA on High-Speed and Intercity Passenger Rail.

The AASHTO Standing Committee on Rail Transportation (SCORT) which is chaired by Gene Conti, the Secretary of Transportation for the state of North Carolina, is working closely with the FRA to conduct the workshops, which will include testimony from a broad range of rail interests.

The FRA is soliciting input from rail communities across country to establish its ***Interim Guidance***; the set of criteria that will be used to determine which Intercity and/or High-Speed passenger rail projects will receive the grant funds. The FRA is required to issue the guidelines on or before June 17, 2009.

“When the AASHTO board of directors approved its policy recommendations late last year, it determined that America needs a robust intercity passenger rail network that provides competitive and reliable service that’s comparable to world class systems in other countries,” said John Horsley, AASHTO executive director.”

The board recommendations call for a national rail policy to cover both passenger and freight rail and supports the creation of an intercity passenger rail account, funded at \$35 billion over six years from a diversified portfolio of new revenue sources.

The complete list of AASHTO board policy recommendations on intercity passenger rail is available at <http://downloads.transportation.org/IPRT-2.pdf>.

The six remaining FRA workshops will be held in Seattle, WA May 27; Sacramento, CA May 28; Houston, TX May 29; Chicago, IL June 1; and Philadelphia, PA June 2.

The American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) is the “Voice of Transportation” representing State Departments of Transportation in all 50 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico. AASHTO is a nonprofit, nonpartisan association serving as a catalyst for excellence in transportation.