

## GETTING ON TRACK

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Gov. Ed Rendell braved the sweltering heat Thursday to make his pitch for why Pennsylvania and the federal government need to invest more money into the state's railway system.

The governor appeared with several Norfolk Southern representatives at the company's rail yard in Harrisburg, just past the Harrisburg Area Community College's campus.

"As the gateway to the Northeast, Pennsylvania gets more than our share of truck traffic," Rendell said.

"In fact, Pennsylvania is one of six states -- along with Arkansas, California, Georgia, Tennessee and Texas -- that collectively account for 88 percent of the most heavily used truck routes," the governor said.

Citing a report released Thursday by the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials, Rendell said that freight volume is only expected to double in the next 40 years, resulting in 50 percent more trucks on the highways.

By 2030, the number of trucks on Interstate 81, for example, is expected to increase from 10,000 per day to 15,000, Rendell said.

"We know that the capacity of our nation's roads, rails and seaports is simply not keeping pace with demand," Rendell said.

He said the state is also applying for federal funds for the Norfolk Southern Crescent Corridor.

Along with four other states, Pennsylvania is applying for \$115 million for improvements to the Crescent Corridor that stretches from Alabama to the Keystone state.

This includes \$33 million to expand the Norfolk Southern Intermodal Facility in Harrisburg and the Philadelphia Navy Yard Intermodal Facility.

If fully funded, the Crescent Corridor would create or preserve more than 73,000 jobs in partnering states, including 26,000 in Pennsylvania, he said.

"This will be a great project for central Pennsylvania," Rendell said.

Representatives from Norfolk Southern could not say when the federal government might make its decision on who receives the federal grant money.

However, Norfolk Southern has been working on plans should the money come in and would be ready to move forward, said Michael Fesen, vice president of government relations for Norfolk Southern.