

News Release



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GOV. STRICKLAND ASKS AMTRAK TO REVIEW 3-C CORRIDOR FOR POSSIBLE PASSENGER SERVICE Ohio joins several other states in wanting new service to be studied

COLUMBUS and CHICAGO – Saying his administration is “committed to providing Ohio’s urban areas with the tools they need to create jobs and attract investments to make their communities vibrant centers of commerce,” Ohio Governor Ted Strickland has written a letter to Amtrak President & CEO Alex Kummant asking the nation’s passenger rail corporation to identify what is needed to initiate rail passenger service in the “3-C” (Cleveland-Columbus-Dayton-Cincinnati) corridor.

Governor Strickland asked that the analysis be done in two parts: Cleveland to Columbus and Columbus to Cincinnati (via Springfield and Dayton). The Governor called the 3-C the “backbone of the Ohio Hub, the state’s long-term vision for passenger rail in Ohio.”

The work will be performed by Amtrak and funded by the state of Ohio. Amtrak will also work with the major freight railroads, which own the track, to determine the capital needs for rail improvements to the corridor that would not only enable passenger service, but increase capacity for greater freight movement.

“State-supported routes are the fastest growing part of our business,” said Kummant. “We have carried out several studies in the Midwest and elsewhere in the last few years, with Illinois doubling the size of its state rail program since 2006 and California continuing to rack-up growth that has contributed to five straight years of record Amtrak ridership.”

“This is a significant step forward in Ohio’s efforts to create new and better transportation options for Ohioans. Moving people and freight by rail is becoming even more important with ever-rising fuel costs and the impact on everything from people’s personal budgets to doing business in Ohio,” says Ohio Rail Development Commission Executive Director Matt Dietrich.

“We’ve already had preliminary discussions with Amtrak and look forward to doing this analysis of the 3-C Corridor.”

Also encouraged at the news is All Aboard Ohio Executive Director Andrew Bremer, lauding the governor for “taking this first step and showing leadership in recognizing the potential of rail development in Ohio. Many other states have already seen remarkable benefits from the implementation of passenger rail services with Amtrak from Maine all the way to California.”

“We are also pleased that the governor wants to include the freight rail owners and operators in these discussions with Amtrak.” says Bremer. “Timely, reliable, and successful passenger rail service depends on the cooperation of all parties involved.”

Cleveland is currently served by two daily Amtrak trains, the *Lake Shore Limited* and the *Capitol Limited*, operating between Chicago and the East Coast, while Cincinnati is served three days weekly in each direction by the *Cardinal* between Chicago and New York City, via Indianapolis and Washington.

Dayton and Columbus have not been served by Amtrak trains since the 1979 discontinuance of the *National Limited*. The 3-C corridor was never served by Amtrak and lost its passenger trains before Amtrak service began in 1971.

The recently completed Ohio Hub Plan and two related economic impact studies will give this Amtrak study a major leg up, since the plan shows the 3-C Corridor can generate both significant ridership and commercial development around train stations.

“This is a good way to get passenger trains up and running as we continue to pursue the long-term vision for passenger and freight rail in the state,” says Dietrich.

About ORDC

The Ohio Rail Development Commission is an independent agency operating within the Ohio Department of Transportation. ORDC is responsible for economic development through the improvement and expansion of passenger and freight rail service, railroad grade crossing safety and rail travel & tourism issues. For more information about what ORDC does for Ohio, visit <http://www.dot.state.oh.us/ohiorail>.

About Amtrak

Amtrak provides intercity passenger rail services to more than 500 destinations in 46 states on a 21,000-mile route system. For schedules, fares and information, passengers may call 800-USA-RAIL or visit Amtrak.com.