

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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WASHINGTON — U.S. Representative John Carney (D-DE) today led a bipartisan group of 38 representatives in urging U.S. Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood to re-program the \$2.4 billion in high-speed rail funding rejected by the State of Florida to the Northeast Corridor. The funding was allocated for high-speed rail in the 2009 stimulus and the Obama Administration has made clear that they will send the rejected Florida funding to a different high-speed rail project.

Rep. Carney requested that the funding from the High-Speed Intercity Passenger Rail Program be used to improve the “dated and overburdened” rail infrastructure along “the nation’s most densely populated transportation corridor.” The Northeast Corridor – spanning from Boston to Washington – has overcrowded highways and airports filled with heavy traffic and air delays.

“Simply put, the Northeast Corridor is the strongest candidate for high-speed rail investments in this country,” said Rep. Carney. “Our districts stand ready to seize this critical opportunity to improve the speed and efficiency of passenger rail service. Re-programming the award would create jobs and alleviate congestion in the Northeast, without adding to the current deficit.”

The letter also highlighted the success of the Northeast’s Acela Express and the strong demand for reliable public transportation in highly populated areas.

“Amtrak’s Acela Express has demonstrated ample demand for high-speed American rail service: in its nine-year history, ridership has grown by six hundred percent. Yet we have not made commitments to sufficiently meet that demand,” said Rep. Carney. “The best chance for high-speed rail in the United States is to build upon what works. Given the population and economic potential of the region, timely and targeted high-speed rail projects are a sound investment that will pay enormous dividends.”

Every state in the Northeast Corridor is represented on the letter (Connecticut, Delaware, District of Columbia, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Jersey, New York, Rhode Island, Pennsylvania, Virginia). Co-signers included the co-chairs of the Northeast Rail Caucus, John Larson (D-CT) and John Olver (D-MA).

The full letter is attached.

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