



**Midwest Interstate
Passenger Rail
Commission**

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**Bringing Together
State Leaders from
Across the Region
to Advocate
for Passenger Rail
Improvements**

September 15, 2008

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker of the House
235 Cannon HOB
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker Pelosi,

It has come to our attention that your office is planning to put forth a request for significant, and critically needed, investment in transportation infrastructure as part of a larger economic stimulus package.

We commend you, and respectfully request that some of that infrastructure investment be targeted to improve intercity passenger rail service. We specifically ask that you target funding to overhauling passenger rail cars and purchasing new equipment.

As gas prices continue to rise, people are increasingly taking the train, and passenger rail ridership is at an all-time high. To meet the demand, states are developing their passenger rail corridors and increasing train frequencies on existing corridors. However, there is a desperate shortage of passenger cars needed for additional corridor service.

Right now, there are approximately 65 Amfleet I cars that, if restored, could be returned to service, at an approximate cost of \$700,000 per car. Amtrak's current capital plan only allows for refurbishing 12 stored cars in FY 2009.

Increasing America's energy independence and providing solutions to our increasingly congested transportation system are overriding national concerns. We can no longer afford to overlook the importance of developing more frequent and efficient passenger rail service as an important transportation solution.

The Midwest Interstate Passenger Rail Commission – an interstate compact commission of Midwestern state legislators, governors and their designees – believes that the preservation and expansion of our existing passenger rail system are essential. Improving this part of our transportation infrastructure will make us more competitive economically, stimulate the economy and create jobs, while easing congestion and improving air quality.

Thank you for your leadership and consideration. We would be glad to assist you in any way.

Sincerely,

Charlie Schlottach
Missouri State Representative
Chair, MIPRC