

Theodore R. Kulongoski
Governor



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Oregon Competing for \$2.1 Billion in High Speed Rail Funding

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act provides funding opportunities for improved rail service in the Pacific Northwest

(Salem) – Today Governor Ted Kulongoski announced that the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) has applied for \$2.1 billion in federal funding through the High Speed Intercity Passenger Rail program, an opportunity provided by the 2009 American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. If Oregon is successful and receives this funding it would create tens of thousands of jobs.

“I am excited about the prospect for improved passenger rail service in the Northwest” said Governor Kulongoski “This is another example of the state looking at ways to reduce carbon emissions and encourage alternative transportation methods. The Oregon Department of Transportation is a leader in sustainable transportation planning and development.”

The rail improvements outlined in the pre-application include projects to relieve congestion in the freight and passenger rail system, representing significant investments that will improve existing infrastructure to achieve Oregon’s vision of fast, reliable and frequent service. The goals for passenger rail service between Portland and Eugene include:

- Increasing roundtrips per day from two to six;
- Increasing on-time performance from 68% to 90% or more;
- Increasing top speed from 79 miles per hour to 110 mile per hour;
- Increasing average operating speed from 42 miles per hour to 65 miles per hour;
- Reducing trip time from two hours and 35 minutes to one hour and 55 minutes;

- Reducing carbon emissions by providing electrified service, possibly powered with solar panels – similar to the state’s solar highway project.

Oregon’s request was submitted in partnership with the state of Washington. The two states together host the Amtrak *Cascades* service on the federally designated high-speed rail corridor between Vancouver, British Columbia and Eugene, Oregon. The Federal Railroad Administration will use the pre-applications to assess the funding need nationwide and provide guidance to states. Formal applications will follow in the coming months.