

Congresswoman Louise Slaughter (NY-28) was joined by U.S. Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood at the Rochester Amtrak Station, where he reaffirmed the Obama Administration's commitment to a well developed high speed rail system that serves Upstate New York.

Secretary LaHood's visit to New York brought together dozens of business and community leaders and elected officials from across the state. They discussed high speed rail as a source for new opportunities and economic development throughout Upstate New York.

"High speed rail can create thousands of construction, manufacturing, operations, and maintenance jobs," said Secretary LaHood. "It can also reduce greenhouse gas pollution, lower transportation costs, and give families another choice about how to get from here to there. Thanks to national leadership from Congresswoman Slaughter and the president, these opportunities are in reach for Upstate New York."

"I was so pleased to be at the Rochester Amtrak Station today to talk with Secretary LaHood about the future of Western New York's high speed rail network," said Slaughter. "High speed rail will revolutionize New York and our nation's transportation system, create jobs while we build it, and help our local businesses stay competitive in a global economy. Bringing high speed rail to Upstate New York was one of the first goals of the Upstate Caucus I formed, and it is exciting to be we talking the first step toward a 21st century transportation infrastructure."

In January, New York received \$151 million from the stimulus package, more than 41 other states. These federal funds will be used to begin work on a third track dedicated to passenger rail making stops in Buffalo, Rochester, Syracuse, Utica and Albany.

Slaughter and LaHood were surrounded by dozens of elected officials, business and community leaders and others committed to a third track dedicated to high speed rail running from Buffalo to Albany. They realize that with better transportation comes economic development.

New York State Senate President Pro Tempore Malcolm A. Smith said, "High Speed Rail is the 21st century Erie Canal. Today marks a historic day for the State of New York with the

celebration of the start of high speed rail service in Upstate New York. Immediately following today's celebration, I am heading to Washington D.C., where Nevada State Senator Dennis Nolan and myself are conducting a hearing that will shape national policy regarding high speed rail. As Co-Chair of the High Speed Rail Working Group of the National Conference of State Legislatures, I am working diligently to ensure that New York State is awarded the funding it deserves to keep this momentous project on track. Congresswoman Louise Slaughter and U.S. Secretary of Transportation Ray LaHood, along with every visionary who is making this dream a reality, deserves praise and gratitude for their persistent efforts."

"These projects will improve transportation options for the people of this region and New York State DOT and Rep. Slaughter are to be commended for their indispensable leadership in moving this project forward," said Amtrak President and CEO Joseph Boardman.

"The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act grants for high speed rail provide a tremendous opportunity to reinvigorate and improve New York State's passenger rail service," State Department of Transportation Acting Commissioner Stanley Gee said. "Through Governor Paterson's leadership, the tremendous support of New York's Congressional delegation - especially Congresswoman Louise Slaughter - and the help of our federal partners, we look forward to working with the railroads to create high speed rail service that is affordable, reliable and energy efficient."

"These projects are a prime example of the critical transportation investment decisions being made by state officials and others to provide a sound foundation not only for improved passenger rail service, but to support economic development opportunities in this part of New York," said Nancy Naples, member of the Amtrak board of directors.

Construction of the new high speed rail line will provide jobs for a number of New Yorkers and local businesses. In Upstate New York alone, 3,500 workers are employed by 30 companies that manufacture railroad equipment. Together these companies bring in more than \$750 million in annual sales. And another 11,000 Upstate workers are employed by businesses that produce and distribute goods to sectors that are heavily relied upon by the railroad industry.

For more on the benefits of high speed rail in New York, including city-by-city fact sheets, visit this site's [high speed rail page](#) .