

Issues - High Speed Rail

Moving Forward: Bringing High-Speed Rail to Upstate New York

"All of us who represent Upstate New York know that we need to attract people back to the area, create good jobs and strengthen the regional economy. Bringing high-speed rail to Upstate New York will do just that."

- Rep. Louise M. Slaughter, Chair of the Rules Committee and Upstate New York Caucus

Background

In January, Congresswoman Slaughter formed the new, bi-partisan Upstate New York Caucus, which was promptly joined by all the Members of Congress representing Upstate districts. The purpose of the Caucus is to address issues facing Upstate New York and collectively work to revive the regional economy and create good-paying jobs.

The topmost priority of the Caucus is high-speed rail. Over the past several weeks, Congresswoman Slaughter has led several meetings between the Upstate Caucus, Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood and representatives from Governor Paterson's office, the New York State Department of Transportation, the Federal Railroad Administration, Amtrak and CSX.

What Is the Third Track Initiative?

Congresswoman Slaughter and the Upstate New York Caucus are pushing for a high-speed rail service between Buffalo and Albany with stops in Syracuse, Rochester, and Utica, that will reach speeds of 110 mph and eventually 150 mph. Known as the "third track initiative," this endeavor will require the purchase of a new right of way and the construction of a third track along existing rail lines between Buffalo and Albany.

How will we do this?

The "third track initiative" is shovel-ready and the Caucus is actively pursuing funding.

President Obama's recently enacted economic recovery bill allocated approximately \$8 billion for high-speed rail projects across the country. Congresswoman Slaughter is leading the effort to secure a portion of this funding for Upstate NY.

Furthermore, the Caucus intends to work together to win federal competitive grants and with Congressional Appropriators to secure funding in fiscal year 2010 federal spending bills.

It is estimated that this project will cost between \$3 to \$5 billion, not including the cost of purchasing the right of way, and take between 3 to 5 years to complete.

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Buffalo News - March 4, 2009

<http://www.buffalonews.com/cityregion/story/596506.html>

"The Obama administration will give serious consideration to a high-speed rail line from Buffalo to Albany as it parcels out \$8 billion in stimulus bill funding set aside to modernize the nation's passenger rail system, Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood said Tuesday."

Press Releases

Rep.
Slaughter Leads High-Speed Rail Meeting with Transportation Secretary LaHood and Upstate New York Caucus

Rep. Slaughter Announces Upstate New York Caucus High-Speed Rail Agreement

Rep.
Slaughter Forms Congressional Caucus to Focus on Upstate New York