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EDWARD G. RENDELL, Governor

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PENNSYLVANIA APPLIES FOR \$28.2 MILLION FOR HIGH-SPEED RAIL PROJECTS

GOVERNOR RENDELL LAUDS RAIL FOCUS ON STATE, NATIONAL LEVELS

HARRISBURG – Pennsylvania submitted applications to the federal government for \$28.2 million from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act to make high-speed rail improvements, Governor Edward G. Rendell announced today.

“I commend President Obama for recognizing that high-speed rail is a large component of transportation’s future,” Governor Rendell said. “With today’s applications we are ready to advance the mission to reduce highway congestion and emissions, and provide improved transportation options to Pennsylvanians.

“The projects for which we’ve submitted applications will, if selected, improve Pennsylvania’s portion of the federally-designated high-speed rail system,” Governor Rendell said. “The Keystone Corridor saw a 9 percent ridership increase last fiscal year, and we’re confident that number will grow, especially if we can further improve the corridor’s service.”

The \$8 billion initiative is part of President Obama’s proposal to invest in efficient, high-speed passenger rail to address the nation’s transportation challenges.

PennDOT submitted the following projects for recovery funding:

- Keystone Corridor East – Harrisburg to Philadelphia: preliminary engineering for four separate projects that include track, signal, power and catenary upgrades, grade crossing removal and addition of a third express track between Atglen and Paoli. The preliminary engineering totals \$30.5 million and the commonwealth is seeking \$27.45 million in recovery funds for the projects.

- Keystone Corridor West – Harrisburg to Pittsburgh: a feasibility study of enhanced intercity passenger rail service between Harrisburg and Pittsburgh. One Amtrak train a day in each direction now serves this corridor. The study is estimated to cost \$1.5 million and the commonwealth is seeking \$750,000 in recovery dollars to help pay for it.

The commonwealth is submitting the Keystone Corridor East preliminary engineering projects under Track 1 of the Recovery Act High Speed Rail program. Track 1 addresses recovery through final design or construction of projects with completed environmental clearances and preliminary engineering, and also through completion of project clearances or preliminary engineering. The Keystone West planning study is being submitted under Track 3, which is intended to establish a pipeline for future high-speed intercity passenger rail projects.

A third category, Track 2, aims to substantially upgrade existing services or develop new high-speed rail corridor or intercity passenger rail services. The deadline to apply for this track is Oct. 2. PennDOT plans to use Track 2 to apply for construction funding for the Keystone Corridor East projects, as well as separate projects covering the proposed Scranton to Hoboken train service and the Pittsburgh High-Speed Magnetic Levitation project. Dollar amounts for these projects are not yet determined.

“The state base transit investment of nearly \$1.2 billion serves as a solid foundation to further modernize our passenger rail system,” Governor Rendell said. “Our continued investment in public transportation, along with the extensive planning and studies already completed or under way, are testaments to our support for these projects.”

“Recovery Act funding is already working for public transportation providers, with stations being revamped and outdated buses being replaced,” Governor Rendell said. “Many projects that have been on back burners statewide are moving to the forefront, and we now have the opportunity to do the same thing with these high-speed rail improvements.”

The first round of grants for selected projects are expected to be announced by mid-September. For more information on the candidate projects or submitted application, visit www.recovery.pa.gov.

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The Rendell administration is committed to creating a first-rate public education system, protecting our most vulnerable citizens and continuing economic investment to support our communities and businesses. To find out more about Governor Rendell's initiatives and to sign up for his newsletter, visit: www.governor.state.pa.us.