



Department of Transportation Opens Bidding for Made-in-America Passenger Rail Cars



U.S. Department of Transportation
Office of Public Affairs
Washington, D.C.
www.dot.gov/affairs/briefing.htm
News

FRA 15-12

Friday, April 20, 2012

Contact: Kevin F. Thompson

Tel.: 202-366-1299

First Multistate Order for Standardized Rail Cars Will Help Boost American Manufacturers

WASHINGTON – Rail car manufacturers across the country will have an opportunity to submit bids to produce the first American-made, standardized passenger rail cars, U.S. Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood announced today.

The \$551 million Request for Proposals (RFP) to manufacture approximately 130 new bi-level passenger rail cars in America comes from a groundbreaking multi-state effort to jointly purchase standardized rail equipment to be used on Amtrak's intercity routes in California, Illinois, Michigan, Indiana, Missouri, and potentially Iowa. The funding is being provided by the Federal Railroad Administration's High-Speed and Intercity Passenger Rail Program.

"President Obama has called on us to invest in transportation systems that are built to last," said Secretary LaHood. "This important opportunity represents a win-win scenario for both workers and the traveling public by helping to create manufacturing jobs and support passenger rail."

In preparation for orders such as this, the U.S. Department of Transportation has partnered with the Department of Commerce National Institute of Standards and Technology's [Manufacturing Extension Partnership](#) (MEP) to connect large car builders and more than 34,000 domestic suppliers, and help them retool their production capabilities to meet demand. The MEP connects suppliers with viable business opportunities that may have otherwise gone to foreign suppliers.

"We've laid a solid foundation in bringing rail equipment manufacturers and suppliers together so we can make these cars in America and create American jobs," said Federal Railroad Administrator Joseph C. Szabo. "As part of the Obama Administration's focus on revitalizing American manufacturing opportunities, building standardized rolling stock will provide an unprecedented opportunity to leverage Buy America requirements, ensuring maximum economic benefit for taxpayer-funded transportation investments."

The Buy America provision of the RFP requires that all components of the new bi-level cars are built by American workers: with American hands, and with American-produced steel, iron and manufactured goods. The federal government's investment in passenger rail means more jobs for American workers and domestic companies.

The new uniform standards will drive down lifecycle costs and allow more manufacturers and suppliers to compete, fostering a healthy competition while helping re-establish the U.S. domestic supply chain for passenger rail equipment and meet Buy America goals. The common design also makes it easier to train personnel, stock parts, and perform maintenance and repairs, which also reduces costs and increases equipment reliability.

These state-of-the-art cars will be able to operate nationwide, providing a more comfortable travel experience, and are designed with improved crashworthiness and other safety features to ensure passenger safety. The cars will be fully compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Selection of the manufacturer will occur in the Fall of 2012. The cars will be delivered starting in 2015.

The effort to purchase standardized equipment is led by the Passenger Rail Investment and Improvement Act Section 305 [Next Generation Corridor Equipment Pool Committee](#), comprised of representatives of interested states, the Federal Railroad Administration, Amtrak, host freight railroad companies, passenger railroad equipment manufacturers and suppliers, and other passenger railroad operators. The Committee has also completed specifications for high-performance diesel locomotives that can travel up to 125 miles-per-hour and for single level passenger rail cars.

#####
