



La Crosse Area Planning Committee

*Metropolitan Planning Organization
Serving the La Crosse/La Crescent Urbanized Area*

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December 2, 2009

The Most Honorable James Doyle, Governor
State of Wisconsin
P.O. Box 7863
Madison, WI 53707-7863

Dear Governor Doyle:

I am writing on behalf of the La Crosse Area Planning Committee (LAPC) to express our support of high speed rail and a preference for the Empire Builder Route from Chicago to the Twin Cities.

I urge you to support and require a Service Level NEPA study using Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) procedures to recommend a route for the proposed Midwest Regional Rail Initiative route between Chicago and the Twin Cities. I believe this process will guarantee future federal funding and will demonstrate the long standing preference for the Amtrak Empire Builder Route as the most cost effective and successful alternative.

The La Crosse Area Planning Committee supports the Empire Builder Route as the lowest cost alternative for high speed rail through Wisconsin and Minnesota given the existing passenger train level trackage and the double track right-of-way. This route has a high chance of operational success with increased frequency between Chicago and the Twin Cities, given the success that the current Amtrak service experiences.

As a La Crosse Area transportation planning agency, the LAPC believes that High Speed Rail service along the Empire Builder Route will help further the goals of reducing local congestion and greenhouse gas emissions. Furthermore, high speed rail will serve as a significant benefit to existing businesses and as a catalyst for economic development.

Again, I urge you to support the Empire Builder Route and to convene the Service Level NEPA study process which I believe will result in a great step forward for the La Crosse Area and for Wisconsin as a whole.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Tom Faella
Executive Director
