FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Iowa and Illinois Receive $230 Million for Chicago-to-Iowa City Intercity Passenger Rail Route

Culver: Announcement begins new age of intercity passenger rail service

DES MOINES –Governor Chet Culver received word this morning that the Iowa and Illinois departments of transportation will be receiving $230 million from the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) to initiate intercity passenger rail service on a route from Chicago to Iowa City via the Quad Cities.

"The Green Line between Chicago to Iowa City—and, in the near future, on to Des Moines and to western Iowa—which has been funded today in an extraordinarily tough competition with passenger rail proposals across America, will set a new national standard for reliable, cost-effective, fuel-efficient passenger rail service in the United States," Culver said. "This will not only create jobs and spur development, but will work toward the Culver-Judge Administration's goal of making Iowa the best-connected state in America. Iowa's families and business travelers deserve world-class travel options— and passenger rail service needs to be one of those options. This new development in Iowa transportation history builds upon successful efforts by the Culver-Judge Administration to secure funding to improve and maintain passenger rail service through southern Iowa. Today's announcement will also inspire efforts to establish new passenger rail from Chicago to Dubuque and points westward from there."

The 219.5-mile route will provide twice-daily, round-trip service at maximum speeds of 79 mph, and have an expected trip time of less than five hours. The Amtrak trains will operate on a route that begins at Chicago's Union Station and travels on BNSF Railway's line to Wyanet, Ill., and then the Iowa Interstate Railroad's line from Wyanet to Iowa City, Iowa. Each train can accommodate 230 passengers and offers coach seating

and food service. First-year ridership is projected to be 246,800 persons. New stations will be established at Geneseo and Moline, Ill., and Iowa City, Iowa.

The Illinois and Iowa departments of transportation submitted a joint $248-million application under the FRA's High-Speed Intercity Passenger Rail (HSIPR) program. The total cost of the project is $310 million; the federal grant will provide $230 million. Each state will be required to provide a prorated share of the required match, based on the share of investment in each state.

A total of 20 applications from 10 states were submitted to the FRA, totaling approximately $7.8 billion in rail projects. Funds available in this round of the program were $2.1 billion.

The HSIPR funding will support continued environmental impact analyses, track infrastructure construction and improvements, layover facility construction, equipment acquisition, and station improvements to implement services.

Iowa's share of funding will come from a combination of state appropriations and local funding. The legislature appropriated $3 million for fiscal year 2010, $2 million for 2011 and $6.5 million for 2012. Lawmakers also approved intent language to provide up to $20 million over four years to help fund Iowa's commitment for matching federal passenger rail funding.

Iowa is among nine states that have been working together for several years to develop a regional intercity passenger rail system with Chicago serving as the hub.

For additional information about Iowa's rail system and intercity passenger rail service, visit the Iowa DOT's website at www.iowadot.gov/iowarail. The complete Chicago to Iowa City application is available at http://www.iowadot.gov/IowaPassengerRail/highspeedintercity.htm.

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