

Resolution urging the U.S. Department of Transportation and the Federal Rail Administration to support the State of Ohio's stimulus Funding Request for Ohio's 3C "Quick Start" Passenger Rail Plan."

(COMMISSIONERS)

WHEREAS, it is the goal of the Franklin County Board of Commissioners to encourage economic development; safe travel; a green sustainable environment; and

WHEREAS, Ohio's 3C "Quick Start" Passenger Rail Plan - connecting Cleveland, Columbus, Dayton, and Cincinnati as part of the nationally-prioritized Chicago Hub in President Barack H. Obama's *Vision for High Speed Rail in America* - is a strong contender for federal funding through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act; and

WHEREAS, Franklin County residents and other Ohioans deserve safe and greener travel choices; and

WHEREAS, nearly six million Ohioans live within fifteen miles of the 3C Corridor, a federally-designated high speed rail corridor and one of the most densely-populated corridors in the U.S. without passenger rail service; and

WHEREAS, Ohio's "Quick Start" plan would have initial conventional-speed service running as early as 2011, using the safest, most efficient and cost-effective route, generating jobs and economic development, and putting travel choice in reach of more than 60% of Ohio's population; and

WHEREAS, Ohio's 3C "Quick Start" Plan builds a foundation for economic competitiveness in some of our state's most economically-distressed cities, where these urban cores represent Ohio's centers of commerce, education and research, all of which can be better connected to a ready and mobile workforce with passenger rail; and

WHEREAS, train stations are magnets for development which leads to new opportunities for small business growth and vibrant urban cores that are able to attract and retain today's talented young professionals; and

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WHEREAS, Ohio's 3C "Quick Start" Plan will bring new travel opportunities and promote economic development in cities along the rail line by creating jobs, promoting regional connectivity, and creating an infrastructure to help spur greener and safer transportation options, including light rail growth and other connectors, such as green buses and street cars; and

WHEREAS, Ohio's 3C "Quick Start" Plan will leverage new public-private partnership, such as Amtrak's annual investment of more than \$12.6 million for goods and services from Ohio companies, and Amtrak's direct employment of 56 Ohioans with total annual wages of more than \$3.9 million; and

WHEREAS, Ohioans need greater travel choices and reliable mobility options, as evidenced by data in the U.S. Census showing nearly 8 percent of Ohio households without a motor vehicle, and 20-25 percent of households without cars in Cleveland, Dayton and Cincinnati, and showing that Ohioans age 65 years and older will account for over 16 percent of the total state population by the year 2015 and 20 percent by 2030; and

WHEREAS, a modern transportation system that includes passenger rail service enhances the quality of life for those in its proximity, revitalizes our cities and boosts the economic development and growth potential of the region; and

WHEREAS, future expansions of Ohio's passenger rail service, beyond start-up levels, may include establishing "local" and "express" train service, opening opportunities for more station stops and increased economic development potential at locations across the state; and

WHEREAS, fourteen other states with state-sponsored passenger rail service are already realizing the dramatic economic development potential and return on investment from passenger rail, such as the Downeaster Service which is expected to generate \$3.3 billion in construction investment and create 8,000 new jobs in Maine over the next two decades; and

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WHEREAS, Ohio's 3C "Quick Start" Plan must win federal grant approval to go forward and the Ohio Rail Development Commission and the Ohio Department of Transportation will formally apply on October 2, 2009, for federal stimulus funding of up to \$400 million under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act to invest in infrastructure improvements, station development and operating train sets to initiate service along the 3C Corridor; therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS, FRANKLIN COUNTY, OHIO:

- Section 1. That the Franklin County Board of Commissioners supports a modern transportation system that includes passenger rail service, enhances the quality of life for those in its proximity, and will revitalize our cities and boost the economic development and growth potential of the community, state, and region; and
- Section 2. That the Franklin County Board of Commissioners recognizes Ohio and the nation are faced with an array of urgent economic, environmental, and mobility challenges that require bold, effective action to be taken to implement strategic and essential investment in our rail transportation system; and
- Section 3. That the Franklin County Board of Commissioners supports and requests the approval by the U.S. Department of Transportation and the Federal Rail Administration for the State of Ohio's stimulus funding request for Ohio's 3C "Quick Start" Passenger Rail Plan.

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