



**ENVIRONMENTAL LAW & POLICY CENTER**  
Protecting the Midwest's Environment and Natural Heritage

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
April 16, 2009

CONTACT: Peter Gray  
312-795-3715

## **Environmental Law & Policy Center Commends President Obama's Strategic Action Plan for High-Speed Rail Development**

The Environmental Law & Policy Center (ELPC), which has worked for 15 years to promote a new Midwest high-speed rail network, praised [President Obama's vision](#) for a modern high-speed rail network that will transform America's transportation system.

"The President's strategic plan and vision gets modern, fast, comfortable and convenient trains on the fast track to connect our cities. High-speed rail development can create new jobs now, spur regional economic growth, and improve our environment by reducing pollution," said Howard Learner, Executive Director of the Environmental Law & Policy Center.

The President's plan identifies the Midwest High Speed Rail Network as one of the nation's best strategic opportunities for investment. This "hub and spoke" network of high-speed rail lines will connect: Chicago to St. Louis; Chicago to Milwaukee, Madison and the Twin Cities; and Chicago to Detroit; as well as provide links to Cleveland, Columbus, Cincinnati, and Indianapolis and Kansas City.

"Let's get these trains moving on the fast track," said Learner. "The President's plan is smart in balancing the need to invest now in shovel-ready projects that will get high-speed rail moving while committing to longer-term efforts that will fully develop the robust passenger rail networks that Americans want."

The Midwestern states are well-positioned to compete for the \$8 billion of high-speed rail funding included in the federal economic stimulus legislation. The Chicago-St. Louis, Madison-Milwaukee and Chicago-Detroit rail lines are shovel-ready to go. The Madison - Twin Cities and Chicago-Indianapolis-Cincinnati lines need further engineering before construction can begin. Under the proposed program, both activities would be eligible for funding.

"President Obama is committed to jumpstarting high-speed rail for America," said Learner. "His strategic plan shows how the stimulus funding will be spent and sets a national goal to build high-speed rail networks. It backs up that goal by combining the \$8 billion in economic stimulus funds with an additional appropriation of \$1 billion for each of the next 5 years. The President's plan further indicates that his vision for High-Speed Rail development should be reflected in reauthorization of the federal surface transportation program."

The President's Vision for High Speed Rail in America – <http://www.fra.dot.gov/us/content/31>.

###

The Environmental Law & Policy Center is the Midwest's leading environmental legal advocacy and eco-business innovation organization. For more information, visit [www.ELPC.org](http://www.ELPC.org).

35 East Wacker Drive, Suite 1300 Chicago, Illinois 60601-2110  
Phone: (312) 673-6500 Fax: (312) 795-3730 [www.elpc.org](http://www.elpc.org) [elpcinfo@elpc.org](mailto:elpcinfo@elpc.org)  
Harry Drucker - Chairperson Howard A. Learner - Executive Director



100% Post Consumer Soy Based Inks

