



State of Illinois
Bruce Rauner, Governor



Illinois Department of Transportation
Randall S. Blankenhorn, Secretary

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New Locomotives Serving Amtrak Riders in Illinois

IDOT leads effort to provide customers with improved travel experience

CHICAGO — The Illinois Department of Transportation announced today that new locomotives are now serving Amtrak customers in Illinois, a major step toward replacing the fleet that operates on passenger rail lines throughout the Midwest. As part of its commitment to providing safe, convenient, cost-effective and reliable options for the traveling public, IDOT is overseeing the production of the new locomotives, which ultimately will result in a smoother, faster and safer experience for riders in multiple states.

“We are proud to have led the effort to bring these attractive, modern locomotives to Illinois and our other state partners,” Illinois Transportation Secretary Randy Blankenhorn said. “Passenger rail customers will benefit the most by enjoying a ride that’s more reliable and more comfortable as they travel between our state’s great communities, institutions and attractions.”

Illinois has received 12 locomotives that are being put into revenue service on Amtrak routes in Wisconsin, Michigan and Missouri, including the Illinois Zephyr/Carl Sandburg service between Chicago and Quincy, the Hiawatha service between Chicago and Milwaukee, the Saluki/Illini service between Chicago and Carbondale, and the Lincoln Service between Chicago and St. Louis.

A total of 33 will be delivered by January, with California and Washington receiving additional units as well. Approximately 2.6 million passengers ride Amtrak in the Midwest each year, with more than a million of those riders in the hub state of Illinois. The new fleet of locomotives, which will be owned by the states and leased to Amtrak, is branded “Amtrak Midwest.”

“Our individual Amtrak Midwest routes are made even stronger by being a part of a network of connecting trains, stations and reservation systems, which are a product of our state partners working together under the Amtrak umbrella,” Amtrak Senior Director Michael Franke said. “These locomotives will power that Amtrak Midwest brand, bringing even better service to our customers.”

Manufactured by Siemens in Sacramento, Calif., the new fleet offers numerous advantages over the locomotives currently used by Amtrak, such as lower maintenance costs, reduced fuel consumption and quieter operation.

Powered by a Midwest-made 4,400 horsepower Cummins QSK95 diesel engine, the locomotives will be able to operate at speeds up to 125 mph, with faster acceleration and braking for better on-time reliability. They meet all of the latest safety regulations and feature better traction for improved performance.

They also are the first higher-speed passenger locomotives to meet the highest federal environmental standards, meaning a 90 percent reduction in emissions and a two-thirds reduction in fuel consumption compared to the previous locomotives that are more than 20 years old.

Purchased through \$216.5 million in federal funds, the locomotives are just one part of a larger effort to improve passenger rail service in Illinois and the Midwest. Foremost among these are the improvements being made on the Chicago-to-St. Louis corridor, which includes rebuilt tracks, new or upgraded stations in six communities, and crossing and signal improvements that will lead to improved safety, reliability, speed and convenience.

Visit www.idothsr.org and www.amtrak.com for more information.

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