



OKLAHOMANS FOR NEW TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES COALITION

Ensuring Oklahoma's Rail Transit Future

September 23, 2009

Attn: Johnson Bridgwater
Rail Division
Oklahoma Department of Transportation (ODOT)
200 NE 21st Street, Room 3-D6
Oklahoma City, OK 73105

Re: High-Speed Rail Initiative

Dear Mr. Bridgwater:

I am writing on behalf of Oklahomans for New Transportation Alternatives Coalition (OnTrac) in support of ODOT's High-Speed Rail Initiative. That initiative seeks federal funding through the American Recovery and Investment Act to develop Oklahoma's portion of the South Central High-Speed Rail Corridor, which was designated in 2000 by the Secretary of Transportation as one of ten primary high-speed rail corridors in the United States.

OnTrac is a not-for-profit public interest organization whose mission is to ensure Oklahoma's rail transit future. Our organization represents more than 1000 members throughout the state, most of who live within the South Central High-Speed Rail Corridor. OnTrac supports the development of rail transit opportunities throughout the state, including intercity high-speed rail transit.

ODOT's High-Speed Rail Initiative is extremely important to the Oklahoma City and Tulsa metropolitan areas, as it would provide an invaluable rail transit connection between the state's two largest cities, which have a combined population of more than two million people. Further, the Oklahoma City and Tulsa metropolitan areas may soon reach non-attainment status under the Clean Air Act due to high ozone concentrations and alternative modes of transportation, especially rail transit, are essential to ensuring the region's compliance with federal clean air standards.

The project is also vitally important to the state and the region as it would provide a direct high-speed rail connection between the Oklahoma City/Tulsa and Dallas/Fort Worth metropolitan areas, as well as potential future connection to Kansas City, St. Louis and Chicago.

In a time of serious concern over future energy costs and availability and our environment, OnTrac believes ODOT's High-Speed Rail Initiative is critical to ensuring the transportation and economic future of Oklahoma and the South Central region of the country.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide you with our comments and to offer our support for your efforts.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Marion F. Hutchison II".

Marion F. Hutchison II
Board Member