

## **SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BOARD APPROVES MICHIGAN RAIL-LINE ASSETS TRANSFER ENABLING HIGH-SPEED RAIL SERVICE**

The Surface Transportation Board announced today that the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) does not need Board approval to acquire certain physical assets of a Norfolk Southern Railway Company (NSR) rail line in Michigan to enable MDOT's plans for high-speed passenger rail service over the line.

On March 30, 2012, MDOT requested expedited Board action on its argument that its proposal to acquire and make capital improvements on the NSR line assets in several counties across southern Michigan did not require Board approval because MDOT would not become a "common carrier" (here, a freight railroad offering its transportation services to the public) as a result of the transaction.

The request was unopposed, and the Board agreed with MDOT's position. This action permits MDOT to execute its plan to improve the line, so that Amtrak may run its Wolverine service at speeds of up to 110-mph across the line, while NSR continues to provide freight service as well. MDOT received two High-Speed Intercity Passenger Rail Program grants from the Federal Railroad Administration of more than \$346 million for this purpose.

In announcing the Board's decision, Board Chairman Daniel R. Elliott III said,

"It's gratifying for the Board to be part of a project that benefits so many. I commend the parties on working together to make this venture a reality."

The Board issued its decision in [State of Michigan Department of Transportation—Acquisition Exemption—Certain Assets of Norfolk Southern Railway Company, FD 35606](#), is available for viewing and downloading at the Board's website at [www.stb.dot.gov](http://www.stb.dot.gov).

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