

Resolution

ENROLLED HOUSE
RESOLUTION NO. 1036

By: Luttrell, Pfeiffer, Mize
and Burns

A Resolution relating to passenger rail service; expressing support for the extension of Amtrak service between Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, and Newton, Kansas; expressing support for a multistate partnership between Amtrak and the states through which service operates; urging the Oklahoma Congressional Delegation to take certain action; and directing distribution.

WHEREAS, numerous studies conducted by universities in Texas and Kansas have determined the economic benefit of Amtrak's Heartland Flyer passenger rail service and its extension to be at least three to one for every dollar spent; and

WHEREAS, Amtrak has approached the State of Oklahoma to enter into a multioperational partnership for an extended Heartland Flyer, with connecting service between Amtrak's Southwest Chief and Texas Eagle; and

WHEREAS, ridership on the Heartland Flyer extension from Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, to Newton, Kansas, is anticipated to double if connected with the Southwest Chief in Newton, Kansas; and

WHEREAS, fully funded maintenance of the Southwest Chief is an integral and vital component of the Heartland Flyer extension; and

WHEREAS, the COVID-19 Virus state of emergency and steps taken to battle the virus have highlighted our need for safer travel options to enable residents in small cities to reach needed medical centers and to provide methods of travel to the many travelers who can no longer travel in airplanes due to their medical situations; and

WHEREAS, the Kansas Department of Transportation has been the recipient of several federal Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) grants that have improved the Southwest Chief tracks. The Southwest Chief serves several communities in the state of Kansas and laid the groundwork for the planning and development of expanded passenger rail services; and

WHEREAS, the Kansas House and Senate have passed the new Eisenhower Legacy Transportation Program, which includes money for the operational expenses of the Heartland Flyer extension from Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, to Newton, Kansas; and

WHEREAS, the Governor of the State of Kansas has proposed to dedicate funds in the Kansas state budget for preliminary work for the development of additional passenger rail service; and

WHEREAS, one of the primary responsibilities of state government is to plan for the immediate and long-term transportation needs of the state; and

WHEREAS, passenger rail service generates economic and environmental benefits throughout the state and region; and

WHEREAS, while extensive capital expenditures are necessary for the restoration of rail services between Newton, Kansas, and Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, the federal government will likely reauthorize funding for the Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act; and

WHEREAS, Amtrak has presented to the 2020 Committee on Ways and Means of the Kansas Senate a plan to request one hundred percent (100%) in federal funding for the passenger rail development of the Heartland Flyer extension through reauthorization.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE 2ND SESSION OF THE 57TH OKLAHOMA LEGISLATURE:

THAT the House of Representatives supports and endorses the extension of Amtrak service between Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, and Newton, Kansas.

THAT the House of Representatives supports a multistate partnership between Amtrak and the states through which the service will operate.

THAT the House of Representatives urges the Oklahoma Congressional Delegation to support the inclusion of federal funding for the full implementation and development of the Heartland Flyer extension from Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, to Newton, Kansas, in the upcoming reauthorization.

THAT the House of Representatives urges the Oklahoma Congressional Delegation to support the inclusion of full federal funding for the maintenance of the Southwest Chief in the upcoming reauthorization.

THAT enrolled copies of this resolution be dispatched by the Clerk of the Oklahoma House of Representatives to each member of the Oklahoma Congressional Delegation and to the Secretary of the United States Department of Transportation.

Adopted by the House of Representatives the 13th day of May, 2020.

Presiding Officer of the House of
Representatives

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF STATE

Received by the Office of the Secretary of State this _____
day of _____, 20 _____, at _____ o'clock _____ M.
By: _____