



NEWSRELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Amtrak and Southern Rail Commission to seek federal study for new long distance service across Mississippi and Louisiana to Texas New FRA grant funds to be sought to consider the I-20 route

NEW ORLEANS – Amtrak will partner with the [Southern Rail Commission](#) (SRC) to apply for federal funds to study a new service between New York City, Atlanta and Dallas/Fort Worth by extending a section of the popular [Amtrak Crescent train](#) from Meridian, Miss., across Mississippi and Louisiana to Texas along Interstate 20.

Amtrak and its partners have been exploring this idea for more than 20 years, but last year’s Congressional passage of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act now creates new opportunities to study possible expanded long-distance Amtrak service. [Amtrak Network Development Vice President Nicole Bucich](#) announced the decision to partner with the SRC to apply for the planning funds at the Commission’s quarterly meeting in New Orleans, supporting “More Amtrak Trains for More People.”

“As the entity responsible for providing the nation’s long-distance intercity passenger rail service, Amtrak will work with our partners to seek the funds needed to study expansion and improvement options where strong stakeholder support exists and initial analysis show opportunity.” said Bucich. “With the encouragement and support of federal, state and local officials, this application is the first step in determining the feasibility of this concept and the benefits and challenges, including federal funding commitments, of expanding Amtrak service to the I-20 route.”

“This has the potential to be the first new Amtrak service of its kind in more than 25 years and it would come in an area that has long been underserved by passenger rail,” said [SRC Chairman Knox Ross](#). “Now that we have a way forward for new state-sponsored corridor service between New Orleans and Mobile, the I-20 route has been [identified by the SRC](#) as its next priority.”

If the study is funded under the [Federal Railroad Administration \(FRA\) Federal-State Partnership Program](#) and if it produces a sufficient business case for a direct connection between the Northeast Corridor and fast-growing areas in the South and West, Amtrak would partner with the SRC and others to seek federal capital and operating support to initiate the service.

[More>>>](#)

Amtrak set the stage for such a study in an agreement with Canadian Pacific Railway (CP), which has acquired the route (subject to regulatory approval). Among other parties would be Norfolk Southern Railway, which shares the ownership of the line with Kansas City Southern (KCS). Amtrak has endorsed CP's combination with KCS.

The Amtrak agreement with CP [announced early last year](#) also provides for future service on a route owned by KCS between New Orleans and Baton Rouge, [another SRC priority](#).

Reactions and Comments

[Sen. Cindy Hyde-Smith, R-Miss.](#): "I appreciate Amtrak partnering with the Southern Rail Commission to determine a possible path for this proposed railway that will facilitate economic growth and access to tourism and recreational attractions by connecting major airports, universities, medical facilities, and job centers from Mississippi through Louisiana to the heart of Texas."

[Sen. Bill Cassidy, M.D.](#), R-La.: "This is another example of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act paying off for Louisiana. The partnership between Amtrak, the Southern Rail Commission, Mayors Walker, Ellis, and Arceneaux connects north Louisiana cities with all points East and West."

About Amtrak®

For more than 50 years, Amtrak has connected America and modernized train travel. Offering a safe, environmentally efficient way to reach more than 500 destinations across 46 states and parts of Canada, Amtrak provides travelers with an experience that sets a new standard. Book travel, check train status, access your eTicket and more through the [Amtrak app](#). Learn more at [Amtrak.com](#) and connect with us on [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#), [Facebook](#) and [LinkedIn](#).

About the Southern Rail Commission

The Southern Rail Commission was created by an Act of Congress in 1982 and since then has promoted the safe, reliable and efficient movement of people and goods to enhance economic development along rail corridors; provide transportation choices; and facilitate emergency evacuation routes. The SRC members are appointed by the governors of Alabama, Louisiana and Mississippi to engage and inform public and private rail interests to support and influence Southeast rail initiatives. More at [SouthernRailCommission.org](#) or the SRC's social media outlets on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

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