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Congressman Has Secured Nearly \$7 Million For New Rail Network

Hackensack, NJ - As part of a broader effort to develop a new rail network in Bergen and Passaic Counties, Congressman Steve Rothman (D-NJ9) last Friday took a test run on the new Colorado Aero DMU Railcar, which can run on already existing freight tracks and is seen as a potential solution to relieving the traffic congestion that plagues the Northern New Jersey area.

“It is imperative that we find new, efficient, comfortable, and affordable means of public transportation, and in particular rail transportation, in order to relieve our overcrowded roadways and eliminate the frustration of automobile commuters who are stuck in their vehicles waiting for traffic to let up,” Rothman said. “The new, self-propelled DMU commuter railcar shows us the bright future for rail in Bergen and Passaic Counties and across the country. It provides the flexibility that is necessary in order to develop an effective commuter rail system in a densely populated area, and the ability to roll out service on existing freight rail tracks instead of having to develop new ones.”

The Colorado Aero DMU Railcar is a diesel-powered locomotive that can carry up to 228 passengers on already existing freight tracks, or 412 on its double-decker train. With its ability to operate on existing freight tracks, the train’s use could be implemented quickly in Northern New Jersey and avoid the need to construct new lines. A new rail network would connect with existing rail lines in order to facilitate commuting by rail throughout New Jersey.

Rothman has been a strong advocate of a new rail network, securing Congressional authorization during his first term in Congress for the project. As a current member of the House Appropriations Committee, which allocates all of the discretionary money in the federal budget, Rothman secured \$2.35 million last year for engineers to study the development of a series of rail stations and shuttle service links for a future rail network in Bergen and Passaic Counties. This year, he secured the support of his colleagues on the Appropriations Committee for an additional \$4.5 million for engineers to examine ways to link existing commuter rail corridors, highways, and bus service with a new rail network.

“Since coming to Congress six years ago, I have been working to relieve congestion on our roads by not only unclogging outdated intersections and roadways that are too narrow, but I have also gotten Congress to begin investing in our rails,” Rothman said. “Whether it is the Hudson-Bergen Light Rail line or a new rail network in Bergen and Passaic Counties, which we see the promise of today, I am committed to furthering the development of passenger rail here in Northern New Jersey.”

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