

SENATE RESOLUTION No. 1716

A RESOLUTION supporting the full development, funding and implementation of the Heartland Flyer Extension between Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, and Newton, Kansas.

WHEREAS, The Kansas Secretary of Transportation, Julie Lorenz, presented to the 2021 Passenger Rail Coalition her discussion with Oklahoma Secretary of Transportation, Tim Gatz, about both Kansas and Oklahoma's desire to have Amtrak's Heartland Flyer route extended north, through Oklahoma and Kansas, which, however, would require federal funding for both states to develop the passenger rail corridor; and

WHEREAS, At the Passenger Rail Coalition Forum held on February 10, 2021, Amtrak presented a proposal for the state of Kansas to request 100% federal funding for the Heartland Flyer Extension capital costs, as well as three to five years of operational costs, through the federal reauthorization of the Surface Transportation Act; and

WHEREAS, Amtrak has approached the state of Kansas about entering into a multi-state operational partnership for extending the Heartland Flyer, with connecting service between Amtrak's Southwest Chief and Texas Eagle; and

WHEREAS, Amtrak has received a Reauthorization Act request from the Midwest Interstate Passenger Rail Commission concerning the incorporation of additional frequencies and a second train for this corridor, specifically, a daytime frequency that will operate between Fort Worth, Texas, and Kansas City, Missouri; and

WHEREAS, The Kansas Passenger Rail Service Development Plan of 2010 includes an option for additional frequencies and a second train, known as Alternative #3, to transit within the Heartland Flyer and Southwest Chief corridors; and

WHEREAS, An accompanying improvement of ridership and financial performance would be realized by an extension and second frequency of the Heartland Flyer; and

WHEREAS, The Amtrak Southwest Chief and Sunset Limited routes would realize a dramatic increase in ridership and financial performance from a two-frequency Heartland Flyer connection with hubs in Newton, Kansas, and Fort Worth, Texas; and

WHEREAS, Ridership on the Heartland Flyer Extension from Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, to Newton, Kansas, is anticipated to double when 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 Kansas Department of Transportation identifies passenger rail development in the State Rail Plan; and

Be it resolved by the Senate of the State of Kansas: That we support and endorse the extension of Amtrak service between Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, and Newton, Kansas; and

Be it further resolved: That we urge the Kansas Congressional delegation to support the inclusion of full federal funding for the complete implementation and development of the Heartland Flyer Extension from Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, to Newton, Kansas, as well as a second frequency directly connecting Kansas City, Missouri, and Fort Worth, Texas, in the upcoming reauthorization of the Surface Transportation Act; and

Be it further resolved: That we urge the Kansas Congressional delegation to support the inclusion of full federal funding for the maintenance and future development of the Southwest Chief in the upcoming reauthorization of the Surface Transportation Act; and

Be it further resolved: That we approve a multi-state partnership among Amtrak and the several states through which the service will operate; and

Be it further resolved: That the Secretary of the Senate shall send enrolled copies of this resolution to the Governor of Kansas, the Governor of Oklahoma, Oklahoma Secretary of Transportation, the Kansas Secretary of Transportation, each member of the Kansas Congressional delegation and the U.S. Secretary of Transportation.

Senate Resolution No. 1716 was sponsored by Senator Carolyn McGinn.

I hereby certify that the above RESOLUTION originated in the SENATE, and was adopted by that body

President of the Senate.

Secretary of the Senate.