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CIRCLE Advocacy Coalition Formed by California Intercity Rail Corridors

The California's Intercity Rail Corridors Linking Everyone (CIRCLE) coalition will seek to educate federal lawmakers and intercity rail stakeholders on California's growing intercity passenger system

Washington, DC – Today, the Capitol Corridor Joint Powers Authority (CCJPA), the Los Angeles – San Diego – San Luis Obispo (LOSSAN) Rail Corridor Agency, and the San Joaquin Joint Powers Authority (SJJPA) announced the formation of California's Intercity Rail Corridors Linking Everyone (CIRCLE), an advocacy coalition. The coalition will seek to educate federal policymakers on the unique nature of Amtrak state-supported services, raise awareness of California's growing passenger rail system and proposed capital investments, and build stronger relationships with national intercity rail stakeholders.

California maintains one of the most successful intercity passenger rail networks in the country. Over the last four decades, the state has invested over \$3.2 billion in improving its intercity passenger rail network. Pre-pandemic, one out of every five Amtrak riders boarded a train in California.

The *Capitol Corridor* route provides service between San Jose, Oakland, Sacramento and Auburn and is managed by the CCJPA; the *Pacific Surfliner* route provides service between San Diego, Los Angeles, and San Luis Obispo and is managed by the LOSSAN Rail Corridor Agency; and the *San Joaquins* route provides service between Bakersfield, Oakland and Sacramento and is managed by the SJJPA.

Combined, the three routes carried over 5.6 million passengers throughout California in Fiscal Year (FY) 2019 and the corridors all respectively rank in the top 10 in ridership in the nation. The LOSSAN corridor is the largest intercity rail corridor in the United States outside of the Northeast Corridor, carrying over 2.5 million passengers annually. The three California routes are responsible for nearly 50% of Amtrak's state-supported business unit revenue.

"We look forward to working together with our sister agencies to raise awareness about our growing rail corridor services and the important role our state plays in maintaining Amtrak's state-supported services," said Donna DeMartino, Managing Director, LOSSAN Rail Corridor Agency. "As the nation's largest intercity rail corridor outside of the Northeast, I am committed to working with my colleagues to ensure that our national policies allow us to continue to provide innovative and modern passenger services and amenities to our growing ridership bases."

“Our intercity rail corridor services are leading the way in providing more affordable and equitable access to transportation, enhancing connectivity across transportation modes, and helping to reduce our state and nation’s carbon footprint,” said Stacey Mortensen, Executive Director, SJJPA. “We have found that we are most effective in telling our story when we act as one voice, I am looking forward to jointly enhancing our advocacy and collaboration in Washington.”

“During my work on the Northeast Corridor Commission, I learned firsthand the power passenger rail voices can have if they come together around shared priorities and principles,” said Robert Padgette, Managing Director, CCJPA. “I believe CIRCLE will help fill a gap in intercity passenger rail advocacy by ensuring that the voice of the nation’s leading state for intercity passenger rail has a seat at the table. We must do more to educate the nation about our leading and growing service corridors.”

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Managed by the Capitol Corridor Joint Powers Authority (CCJPA), the Capitol Corridor is an intercity rail service connecting the most economically vibrant urban centers in Northern California – from Auburn/Sacramento to Silicon Valley, and including San Francisco, Oakland, and Berkeley. With free Wi-Fi on board, Capitol Corridor trains provide a convenient, reliable, and comfortable alternative to the congested I-80, I-680, and I-880 freeways for over 1.8 million work and leisure travelers every year (prior to the COVID-19 pandemic). www.capitolcorridor.org.

The Pacific Surfliner is funded by the state of California through the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) and is operated by Amtrak under a contract with the LOSSAN Rail Corridor Agency. The LOSSAN Agency, which is staffed by the Orange County Transportation Authority, is a joint powers authority that works to increase ridership, revenue, capacity, reliability, coordination, and safety on the rail corridor. Agency updates and information can be found at lossan.org.

Since July 2015, San Joaquin Joint Powers Authority (SJJPA) has been responsible for the management and administration of Amtrak San Joaquins. SJJPA is governed by Board Members representing each of the ten (10) Member Agencies along the 365-mile San Joaquins Corridor. For more information on SJJPA please visit www.sjjpa.com.