



Spring Meeting
Washington, D.C.
June 4 & 5, 2007

Meeting Overview

The Midwest Interstate Passenger Rail Commission held its annual spring meeting in Washington, D.C. in June of 2007 to discuss rail issues that impact its member states and to formulate policy priorities for the upcoming fiscal year.

At the meeting, MIPRC commissioners decided to hold, for the first time, individual planning meetings in its member states. The purpose of each meeting is to bring together the MIPRC commissioners within that state, along with other key players, to review passenger rail activities and brainstorm next steps. The goal is for each state "team" to develop a plan to ensure increased passenger rail accessibility and advocacy with their state, as well as to increase collaboration among the states.

MIPRC commissioners also learned about state rail-related progress over the past year and received an update on what it will take to make the Midwest Regional Rail Initiative and the Ohio Hub projects a reality.

In addition to gaining perspective on advances in rail policy for the region, MIPRC commissioners called on Members of Congress to expand and preserve our nation's passenger rail system. Members of Congress were asked to establish and fund the first-ever mechanism for passenger rail development and improvement from which states can draw matching funds, and to provide Amtrak financial stability through reauthorization.

MIPRC commissioners thanked Indiana State Senator Robert Jackman for his four years of service as the chair and co-chair of the Midwest Interstate Passenger Rail Commission. Under Sen. Jackman's leadership, the MIPRC grew from six member states to nine member states. His recognition of the value of passenger rail to the Midwest, and his spirit of bipartisanship, served our organization and region well.

Members of the MIPRC elected new officers to serve a one-year term that began in July, 2007. Missouri state Representative Charlie Schlottach was elected to serve as the new chair of the MIPRC. Rep. Schlottach most recently served as vice chair of the commission and has been the Missouri House appointee to the MIPRC since 2003. Minnesota state Rep. Linda Slocum was elected to serve as the commission's vice chair and Iowa state Sen. Daryl Beall to serve as its financial officer.