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**LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR MURRAY, CONGRESSMAN OLVER
ANNOUNCE KNOWLEDGE CORRIDOR REVITALIZATION PROJECT****Project funded by \$73 million in Recovery Act funds; will enhance rail transportation, create more than 360 jobs**

GREENFIELD -- Thursday, October 20, 2011 -- Lieutenant Governor Timothy Murray today joined Congressman John Olver and transportation leaders to officially announce the revitalization of the "Knowledge Corridor" along the Connecticut River rail line in western Massachusetts. The project, funded by \$73 million in federal American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) grants, will create more than 360 construction jobs in the region.

"The Knowledge Corridor project is a signature investment in Massachusetts, creating hundreds of jobs while making historic improvements in rail access across the Pioneer Valley," said Governor Deval Patrick. "We appreciate the support from President Obama and the advocacy of Congressman Olver and the entire congressional delegation for making this vision a reality."

"As we continue to strategically invest in transportation infrastructure across the state, we are also leveraging investment opportunities that enable our economy, including businesses and communities," said Lieutenant Governor Murray. "By partnering with the Obama Administration, our congressional delegation, and New England states on the Knowledge Corridor project, we are working towards a significantly improved transportation service for both passengers and freight service in this region and for the Commonwealth."

Lieutenant Governor Murray was also joined by Federal Railroad Administrator Joseph Szabo, Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) Secretary and CEO Richard A. Davey, and other state and local officials in Greenfield for the announcement.

"I was happy to secure funding in 1995 to investigate the feasibility of bringing the Amtrak *Vermont* back to its historic route along the major population centers along the Connecticut River," said Congressman Olver. "As a result of this study and with substantial funding from ARRA, this vision is moving full steam ahead."

On June 30, 2011, MassDOT signed the agreements with the Federal Railroad Administration to proceed with the "Knowledge Corridor" project to revitalize the existing Connecticut River rail line, which runs from Connecticut through Massachusetts to Vermont. The project will restore Amtrak's *Vermont* train service to the line, providing a more direct route, faster service and restored access to the cities of Greenfield and Northampton. Revitalization of the Knowledge Corridor route will restore the original route of the *Vermont* traveling between St. Albans, Vermont and Washington, DC. The project is expected to begin in 2012.

"Thanks to the support of our state and federal partners, work is now underway on this critical rail project, delivering much-needed improvements to passenger rail service, while providing new transportation options and economic opportunities for the region," said Federal Railroad Administrator Joseph C. Szabo.

"The Governor and Lieutenant Governor from the beginning have formed meaningful partnerships with the New England states, the U.S. Department of Transportation, and Amtrak to implement a coordinated plan for better regional rail service," said Secretary Davey. "The Knowledge Corridor is a perfect example of the success of these partnerships."

"The state of Vermont has been an ardent supporter of this initiative as it has moved from early vision, to broader study and planning phases, to our strong endorsement of Massachusetts' application for the ARRA funding needed to realize this important transportation milestone," said Brian Searles, Secretary of the Vermont Agency of Transportation. "Returning our passenger service to this line has been a goal since we first began the state-supported *Vermont* service in April 1995. The reductions in travel time and delays, and the increased reliability of the service upon completion of the project will provide a stronger link

between communities in Vermont, Massachusetts, Connecticut and the New York metropolitan region served by Amtrak's Northeast Corridor trains."

The improvements to the Knowledge Corridor will occur on the Connecticut River mainline of the Pan Am Southern railroad, a joint venture between Pan Am Railways and Norfolk Southern to improve freight service for customers along the line and within western Massachusetts. MassDOT has designated the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority's Design and Construction Department to oversee the implementation of the project through final design and construction and entered into a Construction Agreement with Pan Am Southern, LLC to construct the project.

"Revitalization to the Knowledge Corridor is an excellent investment that will provide enhanced transportation options for customers," said David Fink, President, Pan Am Southern. "Our collaboration with MassDOT will bring long term transportation improvements that will benefit the region economically and universally."

The Patrick-Murray Administration and New England's Governors are working together on a coordinated regional vision for high speed rail that will connect major cities and airports, and support economic growth throughout the region. The [Vision for the New England High Speed and Intercity Rail Network](#) lays out key projects to strengthen passenger and freight rail service along new and existing rail corridors. The goal is to double passenger rail ridership in the Northeast by 2030.

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