

Ohio needs to proceed with passenger rail

SALLY DRAKE • GRANVILLE • MAY 18, 2010

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I am writing in response to an Advocate article regarding Rep. Jay Hottinger's arguments against the 3-C passenger rail project.

While our lawmakers, especially the Republicans, play politics with the 3-C rail issue, real people are out of work and need jobs. The thought that they are willing to deprive Ohio of a potential economic boost from the passenger rail project because of unfounded arguments about initial ridership, speed and cost is completely foolish. The \$25 million will fund a study to give definitive answers to these important questions.

The estimated average speed is to be around 45 mph, not the 39 mph estimates stated in the article. As existing track is improved, speeds will increase to a maximum speed of around 79 mph.

Yes, the ultimate goal is to achieve high-speed rail, but we have to start somewhere. Numerous other states that currently have high-speed rail started with a slower conventional service, similar to ODOT's proposal for Ohio. It is a step in the right direction -- toward economic development, providing transportation choices to professionals, seniors and students and reducing Ohio's carbon footprint.

By not moving forward with this study, Ohio will be left behind by other states that are proceeding with passenger rail plans.

<http://www.newarkadvocate.com/article/20100421/NEWS01/4210307/Hottinger-questions-Ohio-s-3C-rail-plan>

<http://www.newarkadvocate.com/article/20100518/OPINION03/5180321/Ohio-needs-to-proceed-with-passenger-rail>