



BUILD INDIANA COUNCIL

Infrastructure Media Summary

December 23, 2014

Railroad Upgrades Getting Mixed Reactions

WBIW

12/22/14

Plans to upgrade more than 100 miles of train tracks between Indianapolis and Kentucky are getting mixed reactions in Indiana. The proposal from Louisville & Indiana Railroad and CSX Transportation calls for CSX to spend up to \$100 million to upgrade tracks between Indianapolis and Louisville, Kentucky, to handle larger and faster freight trains. The changes could come in the next month or two. And it could mean some areas of Indiana would see up to 15 trains per day. Supporters argue the long-term effects will lead to jobs and improved economic development in central and southern Indiana. But opponents - both residents and at least one elected leader - worry the increased number of trains could lead to bigger inconveniences and even threaten public safety. Under the project that still needs the approval of the Surface Transportation Board, railroad giant CSX wants to spend up to \$100 million to upgrade the tracks - replacing shorter sections with longer, fused rail. Currently, the trains along the Louisville-Indiana Railroad have weight restrictions of less than 263,000 pounds and are limited to traveling no faster than 25 miles per hour - figures that are well under industry standards, according to John Goldman, President of the Louisville-Indiana railroad.

[Railroad Upgrades Getting Mixed Reactions - WBIW.com / Local](#) Also, [Rail upgrade could boost jobs but sparks fears | 2014-12-21 | Indianapolis Business Journal | IBJ.com](#)

What's the value of infrastructure improvement?

The Star Press

Keith Roysdon

12/20/14

MUNCIE – How much are better bridges and roads worth to you? How about a tax of 1.5 cents for every mile you drive your car? Relax. It doesn't appear that anyone in Indiana is proposing a vehicle miles traveled (VMT) tax yet. But as governments find the need to improve our local sewers, streets and bridges, it's possible they'll follow the lead of officials in Oregon, where the owners of about 5,000 cars and light trucks volunteered to pay a VMT tax to make up for declining revenues from gasoline taxes (thanks in part to greater fuel efficiency). The VMT experiment was cited in the latest letter from the Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago, "Measuring and financing infrastructure investments." It comes at a time when "many state and local governments face fiscal challenges," which sums up the situation in many Indiana cities. In Muncie, however, the city is investing in infrastructure.

<http://www.thestarpress.com/story/money/2014/12/20/value-infrastructure-improvement/20692089/>

Supporters of embattled rail line make emotional plea

Lafayette Journal & Courier

Chris Morisse Vizza

12/18/14

Amtrak passengers were greeted with hot coffee and baked goods Friday morning as they waited for the Chicago-bound Hoosier State to arrive at the Lafayette depot. The treats, courtesy of the Indiana Passenger Rail Alliance, were the group's way of thanking people for using the beleaguered route that runs four days a week between Indianapolis and Chicago. A Jan. 31, 2015 deadline looms as the state, Amtrak and Iowa Pacific Holdings LLC negotiate a new contract to continue the 196-mile line after Feb. 1. "Should contract negotiations not conclude before Jan. 31, INDOT would discuss a short extension with Amtrak," INDOT spokesman Will Wingfield said. Lafayette, West Lafayette, Tippecanoe County, Crawfordsville, Rensselaer, Indianapolis, Beech Grove and the Indiana Department of Transportation have been footing the \$2.7 million annual operating cost since October 2013 when the federal government ceased funding routes shorter than 750 miles.

<http://www.jconline.com/story/news/2014/12/19/supporters-embattled-rail-line-make-emotional-plea/20662675/>

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