



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Malcolm Smith

## Significant Partnerships Solidified at Historic High Speed Rail Conference

MALCOLM A. SMITH November 17, 2010

*Public Officials and Private Industry Executives Working Together to Transform our Nation's Transportation System*

**(New York, NY)** - Senate President Malcolm A. Smith and USHSR co-hosted a historic two day High Speed Rail Conference, the first to be held in New York which brought together public officials and private industry executives to capitalize on the momentum surrounding high speed rail, specifically in the Northeast Corridor.

The conference focused on partnering the U.S. with Canada, Federal government, State and local officials with private industries to work together to make high speed rail a reality.

"The solidarity shown at this conference with our neighbors in Canada and with Secretary LaHood, Governor Paterson and Congressman Tonko is energizing and encouraging for the future of high speed rail in the United States," Senate President Malcolm Smith, co-chair of the High Speed Rail Working Group of the National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL) said. "High speed rail will redefine our statewide economy and open Upstate markets to consumers across the country. The jobs and business investments that come with a 21st Century transit system will make every community competitive in today's global economy."

Representatives from over 30 countries attended the conference, and guest speakers included: U.S. Transportation Secretary, Ray LaHood, Former U.S. Transportation Secretary, Norman Mineta, Governor David A. Paterson, Congressman Paul Tonko, Quebec Minister of Transport, Sam Hamad and President and CEO of USHSR, Andy Kunz.

"Bringing high speed rail to New York will mean job growth, economic prosperity and environmentally sound transportation for passengers and freight to all corners of our State," Governor David A. Paterson

said."Working with the Federal government, State leaders and private partners, we are continuing to lay a strong foundation for the future of the Empire State. I especially want to commend Senator Smith who has been a staunch advocate for high speed rail, and who has understood that our present investments will ensure a more prosperous future."

Andy Kunz, President and CEO of USHSR said, "Over 30 countries attended this event in a wonderful sharing of support and interest in the American HSR system. It is an exciting time for this country and a beginning of a whole new transportation system. We have been missing out on the great benefits it offers while the rest of the world enjoys easy mobility. Our current transportation system is like a hardening artery and choking our economic development on a national, regional and local level. We will be bringing this conference to Washington D.C. on February 8 and 9, 2011 to get the new members of Congress on board and up to speed about the benefits of HSR."

"To make our high-speed rail projects happen, we need the commitment of government, business and the community. I am eager to work in partnership with a leader like Senator Smith to move this project forward." said Sam Hamad, Quebec's Minister of Transport.

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