



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Timothy M. Kennedy

## Power Drives Inc. Receives Funding From NYSERDA to Demonstrate Locomotive Warming System

TIMOTHY M. KENNEDY | October 13, 2011

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*Six Freight Railroads Around New York to Adopt Technology, Saving Diesel Fuel and Reducing Emissions.*

*Senator Kennedy Praises Power Drives for Energy-Efficient Innovation that will Help the Strengthen Economy.*

Power Drives Inc. of Buffalo, a manufacturer of train locomotive warming equipment, was

awarded \$250,000 from the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA).

The funding will be used to demonstrate the company's locomotive warming system, a product that keeps train engines warm in cold weather while saving fuel consumption.

The investment will be matched with \$161,962 of additional funding from Power Drives Inc. (PDI) and the participating railroads. The New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT) will offer technical support.

During cold weather, locomotives are often kept running continuously to keep engines from freezing, a waste of diesel. PDI's Powerhouse equipment allows operators to shut down a locomotive while keeping the engine warm, which can significantly reduce fuel consumption and related emissions. The use of this technology also reduces emissions and noise pollution, which is a concern for communities near railroad tracks.

While this technology is currently being used by large railroad freight companies, such products have proved too expensive for small "short line" railroad companies. Short lines carry freight from interstate train lines to local customers, serving railroad routes considered too small by the larger freight operators. New York is home to 29 separate short line operations, which collectively own and operate 42 percent of the overall railroad infrastructure within the state.

The fourteen-month demonstration project will test two different models – more affordable than most products on the market today -- that warm the engine by heating and circulating radiator fluid. One device runs off an external electrical plug, while the other runs off an

onboard diesel generator.

“PDI should be commended for its focus on making train operations more energy efficient while at the same time reducing consumption of fuel and emissions,” said Francis J. Murray Jr., President and CEO of NYSERDA. “The short-line railroad operators serve a critical function in moving freight to communities in New York, and this funding will allow them the same access to clean technology as the larger freight railroad companies.”

“Power Drives, Inc. has been hard at work developing pioneering transportation solutions that highlight the impact that energy-efficient innovation can have on our economy,” said State Sen. Timothy M. Kennedy. “This investment from the state to help demonstrate the ability of the Powerhouse Diesel Warming System to reduce fuel costs and emissions is an exciting opportunity to advance our collective efforts to strengthen our economy, create new jobs and protect our environment.”

“Power Drives patented system has now been deployed on more than 130 locomotives worldwide, in some of the harshest winter conditions,” said Louis P. Panzica, President and CEO of PDI. “We’d like to thank NYSERDA and NYSDOT for helping to bring this technology to New York State.”

According to a recent, independent study from the U.S. Federal Railroad Administration, railroads are four times more energy-efficient than trucks. And railroad fuel efficiency has more than doubled since 1980, according to the Association of American Railroad.

Under this demonstration project, 11 locomotives used by six freight railroads in New York will be outfitted with a PDI Powerhouse system. The participating railroads include:

- Buffalo Southern Railroad ([www.buffalosouthernrr.com](http://www.buffalosouthernrr.com))
- Finger Lakes Railway ([www.fglkrail.com](http://www.fglkrail.com))
- Mohawk Adirondack & Northern Railroad ([www.gvtrail.com/mhwa.php](http://www.gvtrail.com/mhwa.php))
- Rochester & Southern Railroad  
([www.gwrr.com/operations/railroads/north\\_america/rochester\\_southern\\_railroad](http://www.gwrr.com/operations/railroads/north_america/rochester_southern_railroad))
- Wellsboro & Corning Railroad ([www.wellsboroandcorningrailroad.com](http://www.wellsboroandcorningrailroad.com))
- Western New York & Pennsylvania Railroad ([www.wnypr.com](http://www.wnypr.com))

“Short line railroads operate on very limited margins and do not often have the ability to invest in new technology,” said Carl Belke, Chief Operations Officer of the Western New York and Pennsylvania Railroad. “We are pleased to have funding support from NYSERDA that allows us to incorporate PDI’s technology into our operations.”

The project is being coordinated by New West Technologies of Utica, an engineering and management consulting company that specializes in investigating advanced transportation technologies. New West will also be reporting on the economic and environmental savings from the PDI units throughout the 2011-2012 winter. Additional project guidance is being provided by NYSDOT’s Office of Integrated Modal Services.