



**THE STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE**  
**DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**



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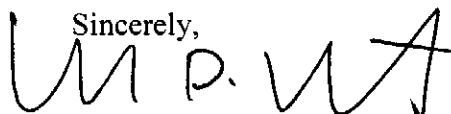
I am pleased to present the 2012 New Hampshire State Rail Plan, the first state rail plan since 2001. This plan provides a vision, goals, and objectives for the state's freight and passenger rail system.

The plan provides an evaluation of the state's railroad infrastructure and service, a discussion of railroad trends and current issues, and a description of the economic and environmental impacts of the rail system in the state. Although rail traffic in New Hampshire is relatively light and has been declining, it still represents an important component of the state's economy and one that is critical to those industries that depend on rail for freight shipping. The state also derives many benefits from the two Amtrak services that operate in New Hampshire, the Downeaster and the Vermonter, as described in the plan.

The rail plan includes a series of recommended steps to strengthen the rail system in New Hampshire and increase its contribution to our economy. The plan evaluates through a benefit-cost analysis several projects that are included among the recommendations. Finally, it provides a summary of funding and financing mechanisms that exist around the country to support freight and passenger rail improvements.

The rail plan was prepared in compliance with the requirements of the Passenger Rail Investment and Improvement Act of 2008, making the state eligible to apply for federal funding to support passenger rail projects in the future.

I believe this document will be a valuable resource to elected officials, the business community, and the citizens of New Hampshire as we strive to improve and enhance our transportation system. I would like to express my appreciation to the team that prepared the plan as well as the members of the technical advisory committee who assisted the Department, and the interested citizens who attended public meetings and provided comments on the plan.

Sincerely,  
  
Christopher D. Clement, Sr.  
Commissioner