

used by USDOT to evaluate which States will be included in the Pilot Program.

Multistate Infrastructure Bank

Interstate compact among two (2) or more States to enter into a cooperative agreement with USDOT to establish a SIB.

Notice of Request for Participation

This Notice of Request for Participation is the initial step in the process that will lead to cooperative agreements for up to ten States for the SIB Pilot Program. Interested applicants will be asked to respond to a series of questions posed in the Infrastructure Bank application instructions to be made available by USDOT as part of this designation process. The application responses submitted by the State will provide the basis for determining a State's interest in the Pilot Program, its ability and qualifications to implement a SIB, and the initial projects it expects to facilitate through financial support for the SIB. The application instructions are also designed to assist States as they seek to develop a framework for establishing a SIB.

In the interest of providing a timely response to Congress as required under the Act, USDOT will begin processing applications as they are received but will not designate any SIBs until thirty (30) days following publication of this notice. USDOT anticipates designations to be made on an individual, rolling basis to permit interested States to accelerate implementation, and to facilitate a qualitative response to Congress regarding the program. The application will be available from the USDOT contact persons referenced in this notice, or any of USDOT's modal administrations, FHWA, FRA or FTA, and their Divisional or Regional offices.

USDOT recognizes that this is a Pilot Program, and is receptive to nontraditional as well as traditional approaches to establishing a SIB and defining the types of assistance that might be offered. Subject to the limitations of the Act, USDOT has no preconceived concept of how SIBs should be implemented and seeks to work in cooperation with the States to define the implementation program. USDOT will not promulgate any regulations for the Pilot Program prior to the designation process. USDOT will not require that all Pilot SIBs be configured in the same way or that they provide the same forms of assistance. This Pilot Program, therefore, gives States an opportunity to determine how they might best structure SIBs. USDOT will be interested in information

detailing how States propose to establish and implement SIBs, and is looking for evidence of well thought out proposals. In addition, applications can be enhanced by providing information in the following areas:

- The types of assistance to be provided by the SIB (e.g., loans, credit enhancements, capital reserves for debt financing, interest rates subsidies, letters of credit);
- Identification of projects to be advanced as a result of Pilot designation;
- Status of any enabling legislation, if required by a State prior to establishing a SIB;
- How the SIB relates to other innovative financing efforts underway or planned by States and how their experience under the innovative financing programs to date can reflect this;
- The relationship of the projects proposed for the SIB to the Statewide Transportation Plan, the approved State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) and any other Federally required plans;
- How the SIB will more effectively use Federal monies;
- The sources of funds that will be used to capitalize the SIB (CMAQ and ISTEA demonstration funds cannot be utilized), including the availability of non-Federal matching funds required by Section 350(e);
- The proposed institutional framework for the SIB;
- Proposed mechanisms and internal procedures to monitor and/or track the flow of Federal funds to accounts in the SIB and the State's preferred reporting procedures to USDOT, given that Section 350 requires maintenance of separate accounts for highway and transit; and
- The use of a SIB to facilitate development of intermodal or multistate projects.

USDOT has established a fast track schedule for this new Pilot Program and the opportunities that it will create for States. Responses provided by States in the application and subsequent implementation of selected SIBs will help USDOT determine how to move forward with the Pilot Program, while simultaneously advancing projects. States should indicate in their applications the type and extent of any technical assistance they might need to expedite implementation if designated as a pilot.

Interested States should request Infrastructure Bank application instructions. Copies of the enabling legislation (Section 350) will be provided with the application

instructions, which will be available from the USDOT contact persons referenced in this notice, or any Divisional or Regional Office of FHWA, FRA or FTA. Completed applications should be submitted to the Divisional or Regional Offices of FHWA, FRA or FTA. USDOT and its modal administrations may seek further clarification of SIB applications in writing or through an informal interview process with States.

Authority: Pub. L. 104-59, § 350, 109 Stat. 568, 618-622 (1995).

Issued on: December 21, 1995.

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Federal Highway Administration.

Issued on: December 21, 1995.

Gordon J. Linton,
Federal Transit Administration.

Issued on: December 21, 1995.

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Federal Railroad Administration

[BS-AP-No. 3360]

Norfolk Southern Railway Co.; Public Hearing

The Norfolk Southern Railway Company, Central of Georgia Railroad has petitioned the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA), seeking approval of the proposed discontinuance and removal of the automatic block signal and traffic control signal systems, on the single main track "P" Line and sidings between Columbus, Georgia, milepost P-291.8 and Leeds, Alabama, milepost P-423.8, Alabama Division, Columbus and Norris Yard District, a distance of approximately 132 miles.

This proceeding is identified as FRA Block Signal Application Number 3360.

FRA has issued a public notice seeking comments of interested parties and has conducted a field investigation in this matter. After examining the proposal, field report, and letters of protest, the FRA has determined that a public hearing is necessary before a final decision is made on this proposal.

Accordingly, a public hearing is hereby set for 10 a.m. on Thursday, January 25, 1996, in the G. W. Andrews Federal Court House Building, located at 701 Avenue A, in Opelika, Alabama. Interested parties are invited to present oral statements at the hearing.

The hearing will be an informal one and will be conducted in accordance with Rule 25 of the FRA Rules of Practice (Title 49 CFR 211.25), by a representative designated by the FRA.

The hearing will be a nonadversary proceeding and, therefore, there will be no cross-examination of persons presenting statements. The FRA representative will make an opening statement outlining the scope of the hearing. After all initial statements have been completed, those persons wishing to make brief rebuttal statements will be given the opportunity to do so in the same order in which they made their initial statements. Additional procedures, if necessary for the conduct of the hearing, will be announced at the hearing.

Issued in Washington, D.C. on December 21, 1995.

Phil Olekszyk,

Deputy Associate Administrator for Safety Compliance and Program Implementation.

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