

STATE OF VERMONT
Executive Department

EXECUTIVE ORDER
[Vermont Rail Advisory Council]

WHEREAS, Vermont has more than 700 miles of railroad trackage, much of which is underutilized at present; and

WHEREAS, rail transportation is considered an energy-saving, cost-efficient, and climate-friendly mode of transportation, particularly for certain categories of freight traffic; and

WHEREAS, passenger rail service, appropriately planned, operated and marketed, provides an added modal option to Vermont residents and visitors, offering benefits to tourism and other segments of the Vermont economy; and

WHEREAS, investment of federal and state funds in Vermont's railroad infrastructure should be based on realistic planning and analysis; and

WHEREAS, the quality of decision making can be enhanced by providing a forum to bring together input and insight from many sectors of the Vermont economy, both private and public;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT I, Peter Shumlin, by virtue of the power vested in me as Governor, do hereby establish the Vermont Rail Advisory Council and designate its membership and duties as follows:

1. The Council shall be composed of not more than 15 persons appointed by the Governor, plus the Vermont Secretary of Transportation (or his/her designee from within the Agency of Transportation), who shall serve as Chair. Members may include representatives of privately owned railroads, designated operators on state-owned railroads, freight shippers, environmental and economic development organizations, regional chambers of commerce, regional planning commissions, the House and Senate transportation committees, travel and recreation organizations, and others whose knowledge and expertise may be deemed beneficial to the State's efforts to encourage rail use and development. To the extent that funds permit, members shall receive reimbursement of expenses and a per diem pursuant to 32 V.S.A. § 1010. The Council is authorized to obtain administrative assistance from the Vermont Agency of Transportation, and the Secretary of Transportation is directed to provide such assistance as required. The council may have additional members, to be appointed by the Secretary of Transportation subject to the Governor's approval, who shall not vote or receive expense reimbursement or per diem but who may otherwise participate in Council business and assist in the Council's efforts.

2. The Council shall meet no less than four times a year, excluding meetings of subcommittees. By December 31st of each year, the Council shall make a report of its activities, findings and recommendations to the Governor.

3. The Council is charged with the following responsibilities:

A. The Council shall serve as an advisory group to the Agency of Transportation and to any consultants working for the Agency on statewide rail issues;

B. Working with the Agency of Transportation and affected railroads, the Council shall examine what steps state government can take to enhance rail freight service, both as such service relates to economic development and to relieving the burden of heavy truck traffic on Vermont highways;

C. The Council shall examine existing rail passenger services in Vermont, including possible extension, consolidation, enhancement, or rerouting of such services;

D. Working with the Agency of Transportation, affected municipalities, regional planning and development agencies, railroad owners/operators, and the travel industry, the Council shall examine the availability of attractive passenger station facilities, including availability of parking, public transportation and taxi services.

E. The Council shall serve as a forum for those interested in rail-related issues, including policy makers, municipalities, regional planning and economic development organizations, rail operators, rail shippers, rail passengers, and others; and

F. The Council shall encourage cooperative relationships between the Agency of Transportation and rail operators.

4. The terms of the members of the Council shall be for a period of two years, and appointments made and terms established pursuant to the predecessor executive order shall remain in place pursuant to this superseding executive order.

This Executive Order shall take effect upon execution and supersedes Executive Order No. 13-03 (codified as Executive Order No. 5-6).

DATED in Montpelier, Vermont this 20th day of October, 2011.

Peter Shumlin
Governor

Executive Order # 13-11