

**Federal Railroad Administrator Joseph C. Szabo
Prepared Remarks
TIGER Announcement Event
Burlington, VT
September 5, 2013**

Good afternoon.

I'm honored to be here with:

- Governor Schumlin
- Senator Sanders
- Congressman Welch
- Vermont Agency of Transportation Secretary Searles
- State lawmakers
- And local mayors

And on behalf of President Obama and Secretary Foxx, I am honored to announce an \$8.9 million TIGER grant to the Vermont Agency of Transportation.

TIGER stands for Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery.

The program catalyzes economic growth, creating good-paying jobs while building a stronger transportation system for future generations.

It's been four years since the program was created through the Recovery Act.

And through five rounds, in all 50 states, TIGER has invested in transportation projects – just like this one – that state, city, and community leaders tell us are essential.

These are projects that target aging infrastructure, as President Obama has proposed to do through a Fix It First program.

These are transportation projects that improve the safety, reliability, and efficiency of service.

And these are projects – above all – that make a real difference in peoples' lives.

This freight project now moving forward is a perfect example.

It will repair 20 miles of rail from Rutland to Leicester.

And it moves the State closer to reaching its goal of bringing the entire Vermont Railway line up to modern standards: enhancing safety and strengthening a critical connection for Vermont shippers to the Class I rail network in New York, and allowing for future expansion of Amtrak's Ethan Allen service to here in Burlington.

When this project is done, 9 miles of old jointed rail on the Vermont Railway Northern Subdivision will be replaced with new, continuously welded rail – plus new surfacing, new ballast, and new ties.

Twelve mainline turnouts will be installed and eleven at-grade rail crossings will be upgraded.

So, in terms of service improvements, this means no more slow orders.

It means the infrastructure is strengthened to support more modern equipment and heavier loads, resulting in efficiency gains and safer operations.

Today, I'd like to add, is a win not just for rail service in Vermont, but in New England. Another project awarded funding will strengthen 42 miles of rail along the border of New Hampshire and Maine.

And rail – overall – continues to be a huge winner with TIGER.

In just this fifth round, TIGER invested \$146 million – more than a quarter of the available funding – in rail projects in 16 states.

And through five rounds, TIGER has now invested \$808 million in rail projects in 48 states.

This is particularly impressive when you consider how competitive TIGER is.

In this round, Vermont's project is one of 52 projects in 37 states receiving a total of \$474 million in funding.

But if you take all the funding requests we received in the applications and you add it all up, the figure is astounding: It adds up to roughly \$9 billion – 20 times more than what Congress provided us.

This shows us the enormous pent-up demand that exists in states, regions, cities, and communities all across American to move forward with top-of-the-list transportation projects. And it shows us why – for this fifth round of TIGER – the private sector and our state and local partners were willing to further leverage our federal investment by committing \$1.8 billion in overall project costs.

To our partners, these projects are not luxuries, but absolute necessities. And they're hard at work today finding innovative ways to fund them.

So to everyone who planned and supported this project, thank you for your leadership. And thank you for exemplifying why Congress should support President Obama's plan to continue making bold investments in transportation.

Keep up the great work.