

# News Release



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
September 18, 2007

ATK-07-100

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## AMTRAK AND MICHIGAN CENTRAL RAILWAY REACH AGREEMENT TO SUPPORT MICHIGAN PASSENGER RAIL SERVICE Michigan Department of Transportation supports action

KALAMAZOO, Mich. – Amtrak and Michigan Central Railway have reached an agreement concerning maintenance and investment levels on the rail lines between Ypsilanti and Kalamazoo, Mich., which are currently used for passenger rail operations. As a result of this agreement, Amtrak will support Michigan Central’s request for regulatory approval of the transaction now pending before the Surface Transportation Board (STB) that would grant Michigan Central control over those lines.

“When the Michigan Central transaction was announced in July, a number of constituencies expressed concern regarding the impact on passenger rail service in southern Michigan,” said Paul Vilter, Amtrak’s Assistant Vice President, Host Railroads. “With this agreement in place, Amtrak service on Michigan Central east of Kalamazoo will not only be protected, we anticipate opportunities for growth and improvement. Accordingly, Amtrak supports the Michigan Central transaction.”

“When the joint venture affecting Norfolk Southern lines was announced this summer, we were concerned that this important freight rail line and Amtrak's *Wolverine Service* might be adversely affected. But what we have seen instead is a commitment by Michigan Central to

work on the issues of safety, and track maintenance,” said Kirk T. Steudle, director, Michigan Department of Transportation. “We are pleased that Amtrak is satisfied with a strong promise by Michigan Central that conditions along the corridor will be preserved, and even better, could be enhanced with future investment.”

“When we began discussing the creation of the Michigan Central, we recognized early on that satisfactorily addressing the concerns of Amtrak and its supporters would be critical to the success of the joint venture,” said David Eyermann, interim president of the Michigan Central. “We look forward to working with Amtrak to identify opportunities to enhance passenger and freight rail service in southern Michigan, based on strengthening the physical condition of the rail line and the On-Time Performance of Amtrak trains.”

On July 12, 2007, Norfolk Southern Railway Company and Watco Companies, Inc. announced that the companies were establishing the Michigan Central, a joint venture headquartered in Kalamazoo to preserve and grow freight service on rail line segments between Ypsilanti and Kalamazoo; between Jackson and Lansing; and between Grand Rapids and Elkhart, Ind. The Michigan Central also will acquire Norfolk Southern’s trackage rights on the Amtrak-owned line between Kalamazoo and the Michigan/Indiana state line.

Subject to regulatory approval by the STB, the Michigan Central expects to begin operations in first quarter 2008 and will employ approximately 118 people.

#### **About Amtrak**

Amtrak provides intercity passenger rail services to more than 500 destinations in 46 states on a 21,000 mile route system. For schedules, fares and information, passengers may call 800-USA-RAIL or visit [Amtrak.com](http://Amtrak.com).

#### **About Michigan Department of Transportation**

The Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) is responsible for nearly 10,000 miles of state highways that carry 54 percent of all motor traffic and 70 percent of truck traffic. The department also is responsible for providing aviation services, freight and passenger rail services, public transit, marine and non-motorized transportation for Michigan residents, businesses, and visitors. More information about MDOT can be found at [www.michigan.gov/mdot](http://www.michigan.gov/mdot)

#### **About Watco**

Watco Companies, Inc. (Watco), a Pittsburg, Kansas, based company, operates 16 railroads in 14 states. Watco operates the Alabama Southern, Arkansas Southern, Eastern Idaho,

Great Northwest, Kansas and Oklahoma, Kaw River, Louisiana Southern, Mission Mountain, Mississippi Southern, Palouse River and Coulee City, Pennsylvania Southwestern, South Kansas and Oklahoma, Stillwater Central, Timber Rock, Vicksburg Southern and Yellowstone Valley Railroads. Watco also operates industrial switching locations and mechanical and locomotive shops across the United States. More information about Watco can be found at [www.watcocompanies.com](http://www.watcocompanies.com).

### **About Norfolk Southern**

Norfolk Southern Corporation (NYSE: NSC) is one of the nation's premier transportation companies. Its Norfolk Southern Railway subsidiary operates approximately 21,000 route miles in 22 states, the District of Columbia and Ontario, Canada, serving every major container port in the eastern United States and providing superior connections to western rail carriers. NS operates the most extensive intermodal network in the East and is North America's largest rail carrier of metals and automotive products. More information about Norfolk Southern can be found at [www.nscorp.com](http://www.nscorp.com).

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