

Office of the Governor

PO BOX 004
TRENTON, NJ 08625

NEWS RELEASE

CONTACT: Jayne O'Connor
Julie Plocinik
609-777-2600

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GOVERNOR WHITMAN NAMED TO AMTRAK REFORM COUNCIL

Gov. Christie Whitman today accepted the invitation of House Speaker Newt Gingrich to serve as a member of the Amtrak Reform Council, an 11-member body charged with evaluating Amtrak's performance and making recommendations for achieving cost containment, productivity improvements and financial reforms.

"As a member of this panel, I will provide a voice for New Jersey, and the Northeast region, in vital discussions about the future of Amtrak," said Gov. Whitman.

"Intercity passenger rail is essential to the mobility and economy of the people of New Jersey. I recognize the need for significant reforms in the operation and management of Amtrak. I look forward to this opportunity to help shape the long-term future of intercity passenger rail that is so vital to the Northeast region."

New Jersey Transit, the state's public transportation agency, operates its rail service on portions of systems which are owned and operated by Amtrak. Approximately 65,000 commuters use Amtrak- owned rails to commute to destinations in New Jersey and the Northeast. More than 26 major New Jersey industries use Amtrak lines for rail freight service.

The Reform Council was established under the Amtrak Reform and Accountability Act of 1997. The Governor's appointment is for a five year term. The Reform Council will report to Congress annually on the operations of Amtrak and will make recommendations on the future operation of Amtrak. The Council is comprised as follows: three appointments each made by President Clinton, Speaker Gingrich and Senate Majority Leader Trent Lott and one appointment each by Senate Minority Leader Tom Daschle and House Minority Leader Richard Gephardt.