



OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

NEWS RELEASE

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Gov. Christie Whitman Announces Agreement To Keep NJ Transit Trains Running

Governor Christie Whitman announced today that an agreement has been reached to keep NJ Transit commuter trains running even in the event a federal railroad strike begins Wednesday, ensuring continued commuter rail service for 65,000 daily NJ Transit riders.

"A statewide transportation disaster has been averted," said Whitman. "This historic agreement should keep NJ Transit trains running whether a federal railroad strike occurs or not. NJ Transit trains should run on Wednesday as usual."

An agreement was reached today between New Jersey, NJ Transit, Amtrak, and its union, the Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Employees, to allow NJ Transit to continue to operate commuter trains on the Amtrak-owned Northeast Corridor Line, as well as the Raritan Valley Line and North Jersey Coast Line, even if the BMW E strikes. The Amtrak union may strike as early as Wednesday.

"Thanks to the hard work of Commissioner Haley, and cooperation from the BMW E and Amtrak, 65,000 people can continue their daily commute to work and other destinations safely and uninterrupted," Whitman said. "This operating agreement is a truly innovative solution, and we're particularly appreciative that the BMW E was willing to come up with a creative solution to allow NJ Transit to keep running."

"Not only does this agreement let 65,000 rail commuters breathe easier today," said Whitman, "it means thousands of New Jersey motorists shouldn't have to contend with the highway gridlock that a rail strike would have caused."

While NJ Transit trains will continue to operate through a strike, Whitman has repeatedly urged President Clinton and the Congressional leadership to resolve the Amtrak labor dispute and avert a federal railroad strike altogether.

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