

# Missouri Department of Transportation

## News Release

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### **Amtrak Ridership Up**

*Passengers Arriving On-Time Spark Increase*

JEFFERSON CITY – Ridership for Amtrak *Missouri River Runner* trains increased by 16 percent for the month of Dec. when compared to last year. This passenger boost for Missouri is the 3rd highest increase of Amtrak's 27 state supported or short distance corridors. Also, Amtrak service connecting St. Louis and Chicago was up by nearly 16 percent as well, with nationwide Amtrak service increasing by 5 percent.

An improvement to on-time performance seems to be paying off with customers flocking to this service. In Dec., *Missouri River Runner* trains arrived to their destinations on-time, 93 percent of the time. The above 90 percent figure for the entire month is especially noteworthy in that formerly, on-time performance in past years ranged between 55 percent to 79 percent.

A contributing factor for reaching this on-time goal is the recently finished California, Mo., siding project, which opened on Nov. 21. The additional 9,000-foot side track located just west of California allows slower freight trains to move off the main track and free up the faster *Missouri River Runner* trains to pass through.

Amtrak trains have been supported by the state financially since 1979. MoDOT is waiting for notification regarding federal railroad administration grants that would allow for more projects similar to the California siding. Notification is expected within the next two months.

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