



DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

NEWS

URBAN MASS TRANSPORTATION ADMINISTRATION

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UMTA 75-08
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U.S. Secretary of Transportation Claude S. Brinegar today announced two grants totaling \$136,484,000 to the New Jersey Department of Transportation. The grants are designed to assist in financing statewide transit improvements. Previous to today's announcement the State of New Jersey has received only \$41.7 million since the inception of the urban mass transportation capital assistance program in 1964.

A \$76,484,000 grant is designed to provide for the purchase of 160 new electric commuter cars for use on the Morris and Essex Division of the Erie Lackawanna Railway. These cars are replacements for existing electric cars which average over 47 years of age. The new cars will be similar to and interchangeable with the 110 cars soon to be placed in operation on the Penn Central's Trenton-New York service, also purchased by the State of New Jersey with Federal assistance.

The \$76.4 million award supplements an earlier grant of \$3,283,500 for the design and engineering of an ambitious Erie Lackawanna improvement program which includes new cars, reelectrification of the Morris and Essex Division, extension of electrification of the Morris and Essex Division, extension of electrification from Dover to Netcong, construction of new stations and yards and improvements to signal, switching, communications and train control systems. Under consideration is a request to fund the remainder of the State's planned Erie Lackawanna Railway program, estimated to cost an additional \$60 million. (UMTA Project No. NJ-03-0014-01)

Another grant, for \$60 million is designed to help improve bus transportation throughout the State. Private bus companies carry over one million riders each week day in New Jersey. It is the State's policy to assist the private carriers where necessary and the buses being acquired are for lease to private companies in keeping with that policy.

Under the terms of today's grant, 850 - 900 new buses are to be purchased. Also being acquired are over 800 used buses. The used buses will undergo renovation for added passenger comfort and environmental improvements. Today's announcement covers only a portion of the State's overall bus improvement program, which includes the purchase of a total of 1,363 new buses. Further, Federal funding to complete the State's bus program is under consideration.

The new buses will be equipped with features of benefit to the elderly and handicapped. Improved lighting, non-skid flooring, grab rails and stanchions, will be installed where beneficial. In addition, State residents age 62 and over can ride all buses on intra-state trips for half-fare during the off-peak period. The State reimburses private carriers for lost revenue.

The new and renovated buses are intended as partial replacements for the antiquated private bus fleets. In all cases, any buses to be replaced would be 15 years old or older. Older buses will have priority for replacement and service deemed essential by the New Jersey Department of Transportation will have priority for allocation of the new equipment. (UMTA Project No. NJ-03-0015)

The State of New Jersey is providing the local one-fifth share of the total project cost through New Jersey State Transportation Bond funds and contributions from private carriers.

For further information contact the UMTA Office of Public Affairs at (202) 426-4043, or Mr. Alan Sagner, Commissioner, New Jersey Department of Transportation, 1065 Parkway Avenue, Trenton, New Jersey 08625, (609) 292-3535.