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New Siemens Charger Locomotives Begin Testing

CHICAGO – The Illinois Department of Transportation announced today that new Siemens SC-44 Charger locomotives have begun testing in Illinois. The testing is expected to last through Sunday, April 23, with the locomotives expected to go into full-time service later this spring.

“The delivery and testing of these attractive new locomotives will certainly get attention now and in years to come as they serve riders in our great Illinois communities,” said Illinois Transportation Secretary Randy Blankenhorn. “Their arrival will be a welcome sight and put us one step closer to providing more efficient and reliable passenger rail service throughout our state and our neighboring states.”

The testing involves a Charger locomotive pulling empty Amtrak cars along the Chicago-Milwaukee, Chicago-Carbondale and Chicago-Quincy lines. Testing on the Chicago-St. Louis line will be conducted later in the year. Engineering staff from both Amtrak and Siemens will be riding the locomotives in order to perform the required tests and monitor performance.

Illinois is the lead agency in a multi-state procurement for the locomotives with Wisconsin, Michigan, Missouri, California and Washington. The Midwest states will receive and own 33 4,400-horsepower locomotives, which were purchased through \$216.5 million in federal funding and are being assembled by Siemens in Sacramento, Calif.

Delivery of all 33 locomotives is expected to be completed by the end of 2017.

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