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PRESS RELEASE

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PAYBACK TIME FOR EXCESSIVE RAIL FARES

In the wake of inflation-busting rail fare rises, pressure groups are urging the government to invest in rail projects.

Campaigners argue that new rail schemes should be included as part of the government's plan to spend its way out of recession. Mike Crowhurst, chairman of pressure group Railfuture, has written to transport minister Lord Adonis requesting an urgent meeting to press the case for rail investment.

"The time is right, and passengers deserve more now in return for their inflation busting fare increases" he said "Gordon Brown is promising 'green' projects as part of his recovery plan, and these must include rail projects such as electrification. if the government is serious about its green agenda, it needs to be investing heavily in rail, not expanding airports. A few extra coaches are not enough to cure present overcrowding, let alone provide us with a decent railway for the future."

Pressure is also coming from the European Passengers Federation. In a letter to the Prime Minister, they call for "substantial investment in improving public transport" arguing that this will retain and create skilled jobs in the rail industry, and "making greater contribution to tackling environmental problems"

EPF chairman Trevor Garrod said "We are working with MEPS to improve public transport across Europe. There is a real need for better rail infrastructure and increased capacity, especially in the UK. "

Notes for editors:

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Railfuture is Britain's only completely independent voice on railway development. We are not affiliated to or sponsored by any political party, trade union, or private industry. We are funded almost entirely by our members.

Rail is a vital part of an integrated efficient transport system serving a modern, vibrant, environmentally sustainable economy. We are pro-rail but not anti-road. Railfuture maintains that investment in rail travel and rail freight is vital to the future of the UK economy and environment.

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