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\$2.6 million announced for hybrids; New bus color scheme unveiled

Scranton, Pa. – The County of Lackawanna Transit System can now move forward with its effort to “go green.” Senator Bob Casey today announced \$2.6 million was officially approved by the Federal Transit Administration for COLTS to purchase four hybrid-electric buses and technology and communications equipment.

“This money is great news for COLTS and all of Northeast Pennsylvania,” said Senator Casey. “These new hybrid buses will be more energy efficient and environmentally friendly. This is another example of recovery funding bringing green technology to Pennsylvania.”

In addition to the exciting funding announcement, COLTS executive director Robert Fiume and members of the COLTS Authority, as well as Lackawanna County Commissioners Michael Washo and Corey O’Brien and Scranton Mayor Chris Doherty, unveiled the new color scheme for COLTS buses. Tan with champagne and green waves will replace the current color scheme of blue, white and orange.

“I would like to thank Senator Casey for his support in helping us obtain this important federal funding that will allow COLTS to implement our long-term sustainability plan,” Mr. Fiume said. “Today is also a gratifying day because our new color scheme signifies the dawn of a new era for COLTS. When our hybrid buses arrive, they will be painted in the new colors.”

COLTS purchased two conventional diesel buses two years ago to replace the fleet’s two oldest buses. The buses, painted in the new color scheme, were just delivered in July. Public transit buses have a life cycle of 12 years.

The remainder of the fleet is expected to be replaced with hybrid-electric buses by 2012. The first four of these hybrid buses have now been ordered with the announcement that the stimulus funding was approved, and the first two are expected to arrive at the end of 2010. The four diesel electric hybrid buses will cost about \$2.2 million. The remaining \$400,000 will fund technology and communications equipment for buses.

The funding announced today is part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 signed into law by President Barack Obama in February.