

Daschle rides maglev in push for U.S. version

KYODO, JIJI

NAGOYA – A former senator advising a U.S. maglev advocacy group rode one of the magnetically levitated trains on Saturday on a test track in Yamanashi Prefecture.

Tom Daschle, who is advising The Northeast Maglev group, praised the quality of the Central Japan Railway Co. train after taking a ride at speeds of 500 kph.

TNEM is lobbying for a maglev system to be built between New York and Washington in conjunction with the railway, better known as JR Tokai.

“We’d like to share the technology as a symbol of Japan-U.S. cooperation. If put into practical use, it will be an international standard that can be adopted anywhere in the world,” said JR Tokai Chairman Yoshiyuki Kasai.

Prime Minister Shinzo Abe expressed support for the project in a meeting with Daschle the previous day. JR Tokai is marketing the maglev to other countries.

After the test ride, Daschle said he and other representatives of the advisory board were “extraordinarily impressed” by maglev technology.

“We need this technology,” because East Coast population is growing, he said.

But for most Americans, it is still hard to believe trains can float, he said. “We still have a lot of effort to undertake to ensure that people fully appreciate what this can mean,” he added.