

United States Senate  
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

April 19, 2018

The Honorable Susan Collins  
Chairman  
Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on  
Transportation, Housing and Urban  
Development, and Related Agencies  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Jack Reed  
Ranking Member  
Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on  
Transportation, Housing and Urban  
Development, and Related Agencies  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Collins and Ranking Member Reed:

As you begin work on the Fiscal Year (FY) 2019 Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies Appropriations bill we strongly urge you to provide at least the 2018 enacted level of funding for Amtrak in FY 2019, which will allow them to continue current services and invest in critical capital improvements.

Passenger rail is a vital part of our transportation network, helping to reduce congestion, improve efficiency, and connect towns and cities across America. As the only nationwide intercity passenger rail service, Amtrak covers more than 21,400 miles of rail lines and serves 500 communities across 46 states, including 40 percent of our country's rural population. System-wide, Amtrak carries more than 31 million passengers—almost half of whom travel on a state-supported route. Amtrak set another record for revenues and system ridership in 2017, transporting over 475,000 more riders than in the previous year. Amtrak's *Northeast Corridor* (NEC) transported 12 million riders in 2017, and demand continues to grow steadily. Furthermore, long distance ridership grew by more than 20 percent between 2002 and 2016, without the deployment of any new services, frequencies, or equipment.

We especially urge you to continue to support Amtrak's long distance and state-supported routes, which provide intercity transportation throughout the country. While the NEC is known for linking major cities from Washington, DC, to Boston, Amtrak's operation outside of the NEC is critically important to the nation's economy. We additionally urge you to consider addressing issues related to on time performance (OTP). In 2017, long distance trains were on time at stations only 45% of the time, a decline of 8% compared to 2016. These delays impact our constituents that use passenger rail service throughout the National Network.

Amtrak continues to show a strong pattern of efficiency improvements. They reduced their net operating loss to \$194 million in FY 2017, the lowest in their history. With sufficient federal support, their efficiencies will continue in FY 2019, enabling them to maintain services throughout the network. Strong funding will also help Amtrak, in partnership with state governments and regional rail services, address the billions in backlog for much-needed infrastructure upgrades on

the NEC required to achieve a state of good repair. Many of the NEC bridges and tunnels are now over a century old, and the average age of Amtrak's equipment fleet is the oldest in the company's history. Finally, this funding will allow Amtrak to continue to implement critical safety measures for all passengers and help make their stations and services more accessible to individuals with disabilities.

We must continue to reinvest in the future of passenger rail. If not, the progress made in recent years will be jeopardized, and our ability to meet the current and future needs of both the NEC and the National Network will be compromised. We urge you to support robust funding to meet critical needs for Amtrak in FY 2019. Thank you for your consideration of this important matter.

Sincerely,



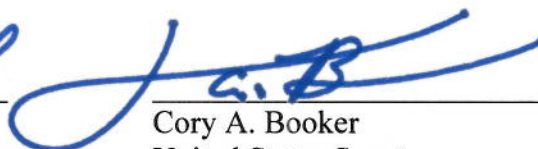
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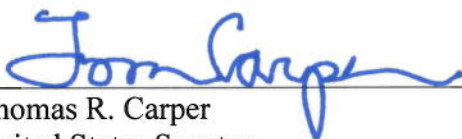
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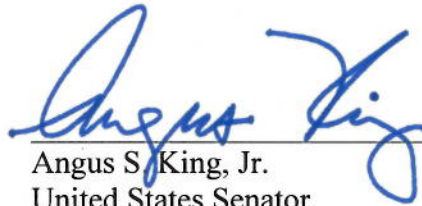
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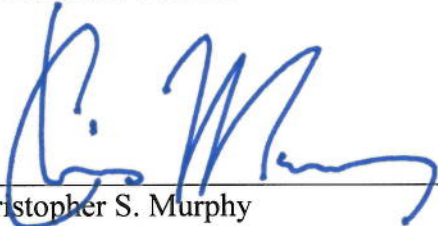


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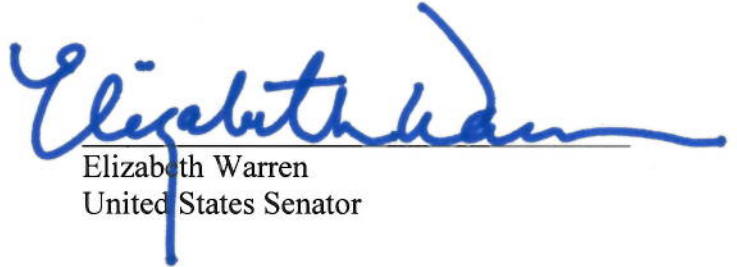
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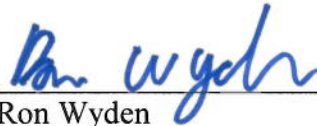
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