

October 20, 2011

The Honorable Daniel K. Inouye
Chairman
Senate Committee on Appropriations
S-128, United States Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Thad Cochran
Ranking Member
Senate Committee on Appropriations
S-146A, United States of Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Harold Rogers
Chairman
House Committee on Appropriations
H-307, United States Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Norm Dicks
Ranking Member
House Committee on Appropriations
1016 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairmen Inouye and Rogers and Ranking Members Cochran and Dicks:

Our coalition of national and regional advocacy organizations, businesses, mayors, and individuals is writing to support the Senate Appropriations Committee's funding levels of \$1.48 billion for Amtrak and \$100 million for the High-Speed Intercity Passenger Rail Program (HSIPR) in the Fiscal Year 2012 appropriations bill.

With Amtrak announcing its highest number of passengers in one year ever – 30.2 million passengers in the 2011 fiscal year – Americans are voting with their feet in selecting passenger rail as a convenient alternative to driving and flying. We expect this trend to continue in coming years with continued gas price volatility, rising congestion, and the expansion and improvement of passenger rail service funded by the \$10.1 billion investment in the HSIPR Program in 2009-2010.

We support the \$1.48 billion appropriation to Amtrak. While this figure falls short of Amtrak's \$2.2 billion budget request to address all of its capital and operating needs, the Senate bill avoids the drastic cuts proposed by the House that would cut operating funding by 60 percent and shut down the state-supported lines that serve approximately 9 million passengers in 15 states – almost one-third of Amtrak's passengers – with negative impacts on the communities served by these corridors.

We also support the \$100 million for HSIPR that was included in the Senate bill. This funding will continue the momentum states are making in planning and building their passenger rail networks. The funding could support discrete rail construction projects or help states complete planning, design, and engineering work for their passenger rail networks. Last year, the Department of Transportation received applications from 39 states totaling nearly \$75 billion for high-speed and intercity passenger rail grants, indicating that the program is oversubscribed and broadly supported.

We recognize the severe budget restrictions you face this year while affirming that continued investment in passenger rail provides transportation, economic, and environmental benefits that are strongly supported by our coalition.

Respectfully yours,

A Better City, Boston
All Aboard Erie
All Aboard Ohio
All Aboard Washington
America 2050
American High Speed Rail Alliance
American Public Transportation Association
Arizona PIRG
Californians for High Speed Rail
Capitol Region Council of Governments, Hartford, Connecticut
Cascadia Center for Regional Development
CenterState Corporation for Economic Opportunity, New York
Central Philadelphia Development Corporation
Chicago & North Western Historical Society
City of Eau Claire
Conservation Law Foundation
Disability Advocates
Environmental Law Policy Center
Greater Providence Chamber of Commerce
High Speed Rail Association of Wisconsin
Hoosier Environmental Council
Michigan Association of Railroad Passengers
Michigan Environmental Council
Michigan Land Use Institute
Michigan League of Conservation Voters
Midwest High Speed Rail Association
National Association of Railroad Passengers
National Railroad Construction and Maintenance Association
Newark Regional Business Partnership
New York High Speed Rail Coalition
Northeast Indiana Passenger Rail Association
Northwest Ohio Passenger Rail Association (NOPRA)
Oregon State Public Interest Research Group (OSPIRG)
Parsons Brinckerhoff
PennPIRG
Pioneer Valley Planning Commission, Springfield, Massachusetts
Pittsburgh Community Reinvestment Group
PlanSmart NJ
Reconnecting America
Redi-Rock Northwest Ohio
Regional Plan Association (NY-NJ-CT)
San Francisco Planning and Urban Research Association
Southeast High Speed Rail Association

Southern Environmental Law Center
The Ohio Higher Education Rail Network
Transportation Riders United
Transystems
Tri-State Transportation Campaign (NY-NJ-CT)
U.S. High Speed Rail Association
U.S. Public Interest Research Group
United Transportation Union Missouri State Legislative Board
United Transportation Union Wisconsin Legislative Board
Virginians for High Speed Rail
West Central Wisconsin Rail Coalition
Western Development Corporation
Western Pennsylvanians for Passenger Rail
Wisconsin Rail Coalition
Wisconsin Public Interest Research Group

Michael Dukakis, Former Governor, Massachusetts

Mike Craig, Councilman, District 3, Toledo City Council
Noel T. Gerken, Mayor, City of Maple Valley, Washington
Richard G Hildreth, Mayor, City of Pacific, Washington
Don Hill, Mayor, City of Taylor, Texas
David W. Johnston, City Manager, City of Maple Valley, Washington
Denis Law, Mayor, City of Renton, Washington
Peter B. Lewis, Mayor, City of Auburn, Washington
Sandy Lucy, Mayor, City of Washington, Missouri
Jerome S. Miller, Mayor, City of Winona, Minnesota
Kitty Piercy, Mayor, City of Eugene, Oregon
Joseph P. Riley, Jr., Mayor, City of Charleston, South Carolina
John A. Spring, Mayor, City of Quincy, Illinois
Kathy R. Turner, Mayor, City of Puyallup, Washington

Joel Batterman, Transportation Policy Intern, Michigan Suburbs Alliance
Paul W. Burgess, Railroad Heritage Committeeman, Village of Homewood
Thomas G. Dallessio AICP/PP, Adjunct Instructor, New Jersey Institute of Technology
Marie Donigan, Consultant, Donigan McLogan LLC
Kenneth W. Fallows, Environment Chair, Toledo Metropolitan Area Council of Governments
William Gallagher, Principal – Architect, KGP Design Studio, LLC
William Gill, Vice Chair, Toledo Metropolitan Area Council of Governments
Robert W. Guy, Illinois State Legislative Director, United Transportation Union
Jack A. Hegge Jr., Switchman, United Transportation Union
Francis Jelensperger, Vice President, Parsons
Nancy Krupiarz, Executive Director, Michigan Trails and Greenways Alliance
Frank Lynn, Organizer, Disability Advocates of Kent County
Michael H. McCoy, Founder and Chief of Operations, RailMatters
Debra J. Monagan, President, Communica

Rajesh Nagisetty, Director of the Foreign Language Learning Center, University of Toledo
Ned Noel, Associate Planner, City of Eau Claire
Manfred Ohrenstein, Partner, Ohrenstein & Brown, LLP
Peter A. Peyser, Managing Principal, Blank Rome LLC
Mark Pisano, Senior Fellow, University of Southern California
Timothy Porter, NOPRA
Richard A Rideout, Board Member, Toledo Warehouse District Association
Paul Rumler, Member, Quad Cities Chamber of Commerce and Quad Cities Passenger Rail
Coalition
Robert F. Seyfang, President, Toledo Design Center
Ronald C. Sheck, Member, Public Transit and Passenger Rail Committee, TMACOG
Ebony Thorpe, Transportation Coordinator, JONAH
Robert C. Wonderling, Chairman, CEO Council for Growth
Darlene White, Manager, Harbor