



NORTHEAST CORRIDOR COMMISSION

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December 9, 2016

The Honorable Donald J. Trump
President-Elect
Trump-Pence Transition Team
1800 F Street, NW
Washington, DC 20006

Dear Mr. Trump:

On behalf of the Northeast Corridor Commission, congratulations on being elected the 45th President of the United States. We are pleased to hear that investing in our nation's infrastructure will be one of your administration's priorities. Renewing and modernizing our transportation and other infrastructure is essential to our economy. These investments will create jobs, improve quality of life, and generate economic growth for generations to come.

Commission members have a broad interest in multimodal transportation infrastructure investments. But what brings us together is our shared interest in the Northeast Corridor (NEC, or the Corridor) rail line, a vital economic asset for the Northeast and the nation that supports 750,000 daily passenger trips on eight commuter railroads—the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority, Shore Line East Commuter Rail, Metro-North Railroad, Long Island Rail Road, New Jersey Transit, the Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority, Maryland Area Commuter Rail, and Virginia Railway Express—and Amtrak. The Corridor also carries 50 daily freight trains bringing shale oil, coal, automobile parts, vehicles and other manufactured goods to and from international ports and manufacturing plants located in the Northeast and throughout North America.

The Northeast Corridor Region is home to more than 51 million people and four of the ten largest metropolitan areas in the country. The NEC connects interdependent markets that collectively are a national and global force. The region generates \$3 trillion in yearly economic output and would rank as the fifth largest economy in the world, ahead of France and just behind Germany.

Congress created the Commission in the Passenger Rail Investment and Improvement Act of 2008 and charged it with developing a formula to allocate NEC capital and operating costs based on usage, making recommendations to Congress, and facilitating collaborative planning. The Commission is made up of 18 members, including representatives from each of the eight Northeast Corridor states, the District of Columbia, Amtrak, and the U.S. Department of Transportation.

In September 2015, after years of intense negotiations, the Commission reached agreement to invest more than \$1 billion annually in state and Amtrak funds for this critical national asset, marking the beginning of a new era of partnership built on collaboration, transparency, and accountability.

Your commitment to infrastructure investment is a tremendous opportunity to establish the final piece of the partnership framework—a robust federal pledge to help restore the Corridor to a state of good repair. While NEC infrastructure owners and operators have committed to funding the annual normalized replacement of existing assets, the long-term success of this agreement depends on federal leadership in eliminating the \$28 billion state-of-good-repair backlog. Many of the bridges and tunnels that connect the region were built in the late 1800s and early 1900s and have not seen

adequate investment in many decades. This creates significant challenges to the reliability of rail services and puts future service at risk. In addition, demand for Northeast Corridor rail service is expected to continue to grow, requiring significant investments in new capacity if the region is to meet its transportation needs and grow its economy in the coming decades.

The urgency to act is also highlighted by projects in the state-of-good-repair backlog that face uncertain futures—the Hudson Tunnel Project connecting New York and New Jersey, the Portal Bridge in New Jersey, the Baltimore & Potomac Tunnel and Susquehanna River Bridge replacement in Maryland, and the Devon Bridge replacement in Connecticut, to name a few—where funding for planning or design is at risk of being wasted without dollars to advance construction. These projects alone total some \$18 billion in projected construction costs. Without significant federal grant assistance, these projects will not be able to move forward.

The consequences of not acting are significant. Each day, the NEC's eight commuter rail operators deliver hundreds of thousands of workers to several of the most productive economic centers in the country. Amtrak carries more intercity passengers within the Northeast than all airlines combined. Service disruptions on the NEC caused by infrastructure failures, rail traffic congestion, and other factors already cost \$500 million per year in lost productivity. Without higher levels of capital investment, those losses are likely to grow. A loss of all NEC services for just one day would cost an estimated \$100 million.

A modernized, reliable Northeast Corridor rail line is critical to sustaining and growing the region's \$3 trillion economy. A strong federal funding commitment combined with the already strong commitment by the states would help transform this important economic region into a true global economic powerhouse. We look forward to working with you and your new administration.

Sincerely,



James P. Redeker
Co-Chair, Northeast Corridor Commission
Commissioner, Connecticut Department of Transportation

Enclosure: Northeast Corridor Capital Investment Plan: Fiscal Years 2017 – 2021