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United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

June 15, 2022

The Honorable Amit Bose
Administrator
Federal Railroad Administration
1200 New Jersey Avenue SE
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Administrator Bose:

I write today to reiterate my strong support for reestablishing passenger rail service between New York, New York and Scranton, Pennsylvania through the Federal Railroad Administration's (FRA) Federal-State Partnership for Intercity Passenger Rail under the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act. This is a once-in-a-generation opportunity that would bring substantial economic investment to Northeastern Pennsylvania.

As we discussed in our recent call, there has been no passenger rail service between New York and Scranton for over fifty years. Restoring service to my hometown has long been a priority of mine in the Senate, which is why I was proud to support President Biden's infrastructure law that will invest over \$65 billion in our Nation's railways. Spent wisely, this historic funding can help rebuild and revitalize American rail infrastructure after decades of underinvestment while simultaneously expanding service into new corridors and bringing alternative transportation options to thousands of people nationwide. It is my strong hope that Scranton will be the terminus of one such corridor.

As you noted in our call, bringing multiple new passenger rail corridors to life will be a serious undertaking, even with the financial resources from the infrastructure law already secured. These projects require significant political and public will, dedicated resources and sustained focus to reach completion. While the potential path ahead for Scranton-New York service is a substantial undertaking, I am confident that the tireless work of advocates and leaders in Northeastern Pennsylvania and New Jersey will carry this project through to the finish line.

In addition to the strong regional support, the Scranton-New York route is nationally competitive. The recent "Amtrak 2021 Corridor Vision" report identified the route as having both comparatively few physical infrastructure needs and a high prospective ridership. Amtrak has also stated that building out New York-to-Scranton service is a relatively low-cost project, listing it among those with the "lowest infrastructure cost per new passenger for full build out." With dedicated federal investment, strong local coordination and the hardworking spirit of

Northeastern Pennsylvania, I believe Scranton-New York rail service can move from a legacy of the past to a reality for the future.

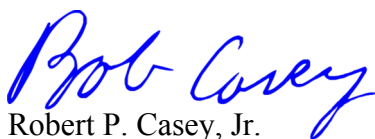
I know we share the belief that rail service can be a profound economic development opportunity for people in areas of the country that have been left behind for too long. This is especially true in Northeastern Pennsylvania. According to a study from Amtrak, rail service from New York to Scranton would generate \$87 million of economic activity every year, on top of \$2.9 billion in one-time capital investments during construction.

These economic opportunities would not be limited to residents of Scranton but would extend to people in towns along the route as well. The tourism industry driving much of the economic development in Northeastern Pennsylvania—especially in the Poconos—will only continue to grow and thrive with the addition of new visitors from New York and New Jersey arriving by train. The very idea of passenger rail service is already contributing to growth: Margaritaville Resorts group announced plans for major investments in the Poconos, including the donation of land for a future Amtrak station. Pennsylvanians from Tobyhanna to East Stroudsburg, as well as people across the river in New Jersey, stand to benefit significantly from rail service resuming in the region.

Successful restoration of passenger rail service from Scranton to New York can serve as example of how prudent, major federal investment in transportation infrastructure can improve the lives of people and communities across the Nation. Additionally, successful implementation will justify similar investments in the future, ensuring that President Biden’s infrastructure law is not a one-off event but rather the first of many investments to expand and improve American passenger rail.

I applaud the FRA’s ongoing work in rolling out the many rail programs in the infrastructure law, especially the Corridor Identification and Development program, which will help advise and guide applicants through the build out of new passenger rail routes. My staff and I look forward to working with the FRA, Amtrak and local leaders in Northeastern Pennsylvania to ensure that the New York-to-Scranton line is in the best position to compete for the funding provided by the infrastructure law.

Sincerely,



Robert P. Casey, Jr.
United States Senator