

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

January 10, 2008

Alexander Kummant
President and Chief Executive Officer
Amtrak
60 Massachusetts Ave, NE
Washington, DC 20002

Dear Mr. Kummant:

On behalf of New York and Pennsylvania, we write in support of efforts to create passenger rail service between Binghamton, NY and Scranton, PA along the I-81 rail corridor and urge Amtrak to conduct a feasibility study of this proposed rail line. Located only 60 miles apart, expanding passenger rail service to between these two cities will afford residents of the region an important new transportation option and could have a profound impact on economic development in the region. A feasibility study that analyzes the costs and benefits of passenger service and documents commuter patterns is an essential first step to determining the viability of this project.

We believe this project will compliment the existing effort to return commuter based service between Scranton, Pa. and Hoboken, NJ, known as the New Jersey-Pennsylvania Lackawanna Cutoff Rail Restoration. The proposed rail service between Binghamton and Scranton could link up to the Lackawanna Cutoff project, potentially creating a rail link from Binghamton to New York City, via Scranton and Hoboken.

With its academic facilities, businesses, and cultural opportunities, Binghamton is an ideal place for expanded passenger rail service. There is strong interest among local residents in Binghamton and Scranton who would take advantage of this new service between the cities and also use it to ultimately gain access to New York City. Additionally, with this new service, more business and leisure travelers from New York City would be able to access the many assets that Binghamton and Scranton have to offer and tap into the local economy for new economic development opportunities.

A thorough evaluation of the ability of the I-81 corridor to support the proposed passenger services is necessary to determine the potential cost and economic significance of this proposal. We urge you commence this feasibility study so that this crucial development project can begin as soon as possible. Thank you for your time and consideration of this important matter.

Sincerely,



Charles E. Schumer
United States Senator

Hillary Rodham Clinton
United States Senator



Arlen Specter
United States Senator

(Amtrak 1-10-08)



Robert P. Casey, Jr.
United States Senator