

January 17, 2018

The Honorable Thad Cochran Chairman Senate Appropriations Committee United States Senate Washington, D. C. 20510 The Honorable Patrick Leahy Vice Chairman Senate Appropriations Committee United States Senate Washington, D. C. 20510

Dear Chairman Cochran and Vice Chairman Member Leahy:

On behalf of business stakeholders and commuters along the Northeast Corridor (NEC), we urge you to ensure that the corridor's rail infrastructure receives critical investment in FY 2018 by fully funding the Federal-State Partnership for State of Good Repair"- a federally authorized grant program for rail/NEC.

To that end, we ask you to fully appropriate funding for the *Federal-State Partnership for State of Good Repair* grant program, authorized under the Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act. The purpose of the grant is to reduce the state of good repair backlog on publicly-owned or Amtrak-owned infrastructure, equipment, and facilities. Given its impact on the regional and national economy, repairing the NEC through this grant program must be a top priority. The Senate included \$26 million for the program in their FY 2018 THUD bill. However, the House fully appropriated \$500 million – which could be leveraged (via State matching requirement) to a total investment of up to \$1 billion.

Failure to include any funding at all for 2018 will drastically increase the long-term risks facing the Corridor and its communities.

According to the Northeast Corridor Commission, "The loss of the NEC for a single day could cost the country \$100 million in added congestion, productivity losses, and other transportation impacts." At the same time, Amtrak and the commuter railroads operating on the NEC transport a workforce that contributes nearly \$50 billion annually to the American economy.

The gulf between what the NEC provides to the nation and what it receives in investment is staggering.

Without sustained federal investment, years of under-investment in the NEC will add up fast. In just the past year we've seen numerous incidents which nearly crippled the corridor and negatively impacted the nearly 800,000 daily rail passengers and thousands of businesses. To put it in more perspective, 2017 marked the five-year anniversary of Superstorm Sandy, which battered the Northeast seaboard and caused storm-related damage costs of nearly \$37 billion in New Jersey and \$19 billion in New York City, not including the \$4.75 billion in infrastructure damage estimated by the Metropolitan Transportation Authority. Nearly 11 million commuters were left without service, and Amtrak suspended service ending and originating in East Coast stations, severely impacting mobility along the corridor. The anniversary of Sandy and mounting

public incidents are an important reminder of the need to invest in the corridor and to not punt solutions off to the future.

While the bill for all the NEC state-of-good repair needs is daunting—funding the program will help avoid future failures and secure a sustainable infrastructure for the future. This not only supports the corridor, but the entire nation.

Thank you for your leadership on this critical challenge.

Sincerely,

Alstom USA

American Council of Engineering Companies

The Chamber of Commerce for Greater Philadelphia, CEO Council for Growth

CH2M

Drexel University

Financial Services Roundtable

General Contractors Association of New York

Guardian Life Insurance

HDR

HNTB

New Jersey League of Municipalities

Partnership for New York City

Parsons

Regional Planning Association

Railway Supply Institute

Siemens

STV

cc: The Honorable Susan Collins, Chairman, Senate Appropriations Transportation, Housing and Urban Development Subcommittee

The Honorable Jack Reed, Ranking Member, Senate Appropriations Transportation, Housing and Urban Development Subcommittee

The Honorable John Thune, Chairman, Senate Commerce Committee

The Honorable Bill Nelson, Ranking Member, Senate Commerce Committee