

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

July 15, 2026

The Honorable Mike Johnson
Speaker of the House
U.S. House of Representatives
H-232, U.S. Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable John Thune
Majority Leader
United States Senate
S-221, U.S. Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Hakeem Jeffries
Democratic Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
H-204, U.S. Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Charles E. Schumer
Minority Leader
United States Senate
S-221, U.S. Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Speaker Johnson, Leader Jeffries, Leader Thune, and Leader Schumer:

As Congress considers H.R. 8870, the BUILD America 250 Act, we urge you to include multiyear advance appropriations for passenger rail programs in the final surface transportation reauthorization package. Advance appropriations provide states, Amtrak, and transportation agencies with the funding stability needed to plan and deliver major rail infrastructure projects. Without predictable federal support, these investments remain subject to annual appropriations decisions, making it more difficult to advance projects that are critical to the nation's transportation network.

Major rail infrastructure projects often take years to move from conception to completion. Because these investments require long-term planning and sustained commitments, uncertainty in future funding can delay project delivery and increase costs. At a time when passenger rail ridership is growing, with Amtrak reporting 34.5 million customer trips in FY25, and states are making significant investments in rail transportation, Congress should ensure that federal funding mechanisms reflect the realities of how these projects are delivered.¹

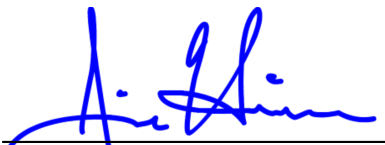
As Members representing communities served by passenger rail, we have seen firsthand the importance of sustained federal investment in passenger rail infrastructure. Congress recognized this importance when it enacted the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA). By providing \$66 billion in advance appropriations for passenger rail programs, IIJA gave rail stakeholders the ability to undertake long-term capital planning and move major infrastructure projects forward.

¹ Amtrak, Amtrak: A Year of Records (Nov. 18, 2025), <https://media.amtrak.com/2025/11/amtrak-a-year-of-records/>

The value of this approach is particularly evident in the Northeast Corridor, the nation's busiest passenger rail corridor, which carries more than 694,000 passengers on weekdays and 367,000 passengers on weekends.² IIJA included approximately \$24 billion for the Northeast Corridor through the Federal-State Partnership for Intercity Passenger Rail Program, as well as \$6 billion in direct funding for capital projects on Amtrak's Northeast Corridor. These investments are helping address some of the Northeast Corridor's most significant infrastructure challenges, many of which have been deferred for generations.

As Congress develops the next surface transportation authorization, we urge you to build upon the framework established by IIJA and include multiyear advance appropriations for passenger rail programs. Continued funding certainty is essential to maintaining progress on critical projects and ensuring the long-term reliability of the nation's most heavily used passenger rail corridor. A return to uncertain annual appropriations would dismantle a growing and vibrant industry that is employing thousands of new people throughout the supply chain and delivering improved passenger rail service for the country. Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,



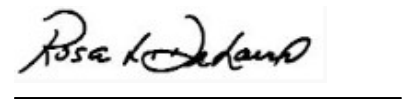
Jim Himes
Member of Congress



Richard Blumenthal
United States Senator



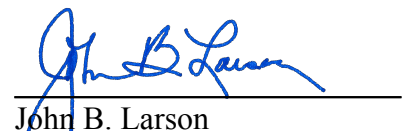
Christopher S. Murphy
United States Senator



Rosa L. DeLauro
Member of Congress

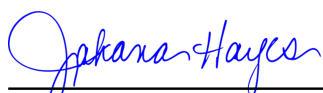


Joe Courtney
Member of Congress



John B. Larson
Member of Congress

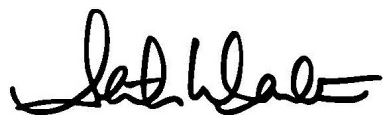
² Northeast Corridor Commission, Discover the Northeast Corridor Quarterly Train Performance and Capital Report (Feb. 28, 2025), <https://nec-commission.com/discover-the-northeast-corridor-quarterly-train-performance-and-capital-report/>



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Subcommittee on Nutrition
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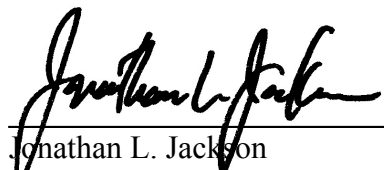
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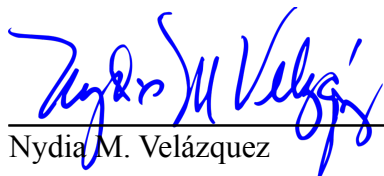
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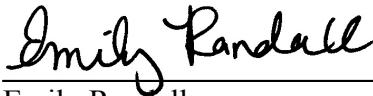
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Emily Randall
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