

United States Senate

September 18, 2024

The Honorable Amit Bose
Administrator
Federal Railroad Administration
1200 New Jersey Avenue, S.E.
Washington, D.C. 20590

Dear Administrator Bose:

I write in support of the applications submitted jointly by Amtrak, the Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA), and NJ TRANSIT (NJT) to the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) Federal-State Partnership Intercity Passenger Rail – Northeast Corridor grant program for the New York Penn Station Reconstruction Project and Gateway: New York Penn Station Expansion Project.

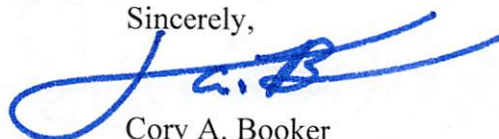
The New York Penn Station Reconstruction Project will improve safety, railroad functions, and the overall customer experience within the existing Penn Station facility. These goals will be achieved by increasing passenger circulation space and relieving passenger crowding, improving egress and accessibility, upgrading climate control systems, and modernizing outdated and substandard equipment and conditions. Modernizing and expanding the capacity of Penn Station will collectively ensure that the rail network can support our region's population growth and economic growth in the years to come.

The Gateway: New York Penn Station Expansion Project will double the capacity of peak-hour rail capacity between New Jersey and New York. Penn Station is a major hub linking Amtrak, Long Island Rail Road, MTA services, and NJT services. Once completed, this project will increase service frequency, improve reliability, and enhance customer experience for hundreds of thousands of daily passengers at North America's busiest rail passenger station. The requested funding for the expansion project will fund preliminary engineering and environmental review, which will evaluate opportunities to expand the rail capacity of Penn Station by adding tracks, platforms, and passenger concourses and amenities.

Commuters who rely heavily on passenger rail at Penn Station to get to and from their jobs will benefit from a safer, modernized, and higher capacity Penn Station. This project is a key component of the Gateway Program, which includes multiple projects to expand trans-Hudson rail service. The 2045 Gateway service plan includes a substantial increase in intercity and commuter rail service and enables a one-seat ride to Penn Station for five NJT lines that lack direct service today.

I ask that you give all due consideration to these meritorious grant proposals, and I thank you in advance for your attention to these important projects. Should you have any questions, please contact me or my staff at (973) 639-8700.

Sincerely,



Cory A. Booker
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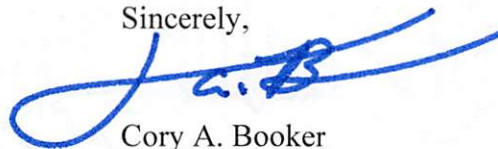
I write in support of the application submitted jointly by Amtrak and NJ TRANSIT (NJT) to the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) Federal-State Partnership Intercity Passenger Rail – Northeast Corridor grant program for the County-Newark Catenary Upgrades Project. This project will improve the consistency, quality, and reliability of Amtrak and NJT services that run on the Northeast Corridor (NEC).

The County-Newark Catenary Upgrades Project consists of the design and environmental review phase of a critical catenary wire replacement effort that is essential to maintaining reliable high-speed Amtrak and NJT train service along Amtrak's NEC in New Jersey. The project scope includes a 23-mile stretch of the NEC that will receive new catenary wires, along with upgrades to the grounding and bonding systems for eight NJT stations. These catenary upgrades are a top priority for New Jerseyans. The aging catenary wires have been a longstanding problem for NJT service, but has become unbearably challenging for commuters, as seen during the frequent service disruptions in Q2 and Q3 of this year.

A completed project will bring major improvements to the system by enhancing operational efficiency through more reliable and consistent power delivery to electric trains, allowing for smoother acceleration and deceleration, increasing equipment lifespans, and decreasing maintenance costs. It will improve reliability for New Jersey commuters who use NJT to commute to work or connect to other modes of transportation at major hubs like Newark Penn Station, New York Penn Station, and Newark Liberty International Airport. FRA funding will enhance regional connectivity, efficiency, and safety while addressing the need for catenary upgrades noted in my letter to Secretary Buttigieg on June 27, 2024.

I ask that you give all due consideration to this meritorious grant proposal, and I thank you in advance for your attention to this important project. Should you have any questions, please contact me or my staff at (973) 639-8700.

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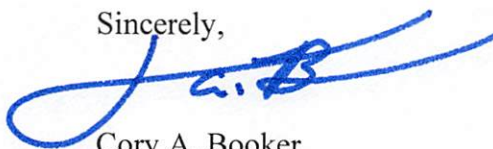
I write in support of the application submitted jointly by Amtrak and NJ TRANSIT (NJT) to the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) Federal-State Partnership Intercity Passenger Rail – Northeast Corridor grant program for the Kearny Sub 41 Relocation Design and Construction Project. This project will improve the consistency, quality, and reliability of Amtrak and NJT services that run on the Northeast Corridor (NEC).

The Kearny Sub 41 Relocation Design and Construction Project will address the vulnerability of the existing electrical substation, which was severely damaged by Superstorm Sandy in 2012. This substation provides traction power to a heavily trafficked section of the NEC and is situated on a flood-prone artificial island on the Cedar Creek Marsh. A new substation will be located on an elevated platform 15 feet above the Federal Emergency Management Agency 500-year flood plain.

This project will raise the access road and include the installation of new catenary wires. A rebuilt substation will ensure this critical facility can withstand a 500-year flood event, building resiliency and mitigating the risks that the station will fail during similar, future weather events. FRA funding will enhance regional connectivity, efficiency, and safety while addressing the need for catenary upgrades noted in my letter to Secretary Buttigieg on June 27, 2024.

I ask that you give all due consideration to this meritorious grant proposal, and I thank you in advance for your attention to this important project. Should you have any questions, please contact me or my staff at (973) 639-8700.

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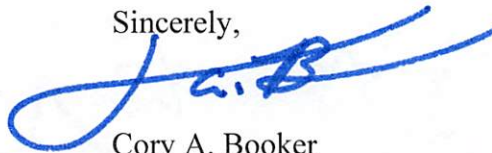
Dear Administrator Bose:

I write in support of the application submitted jointly by Amtrak and NJ TRANSIT (NJT) to the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) Federal-State Partnership Intercity Passenger Rail – Northeast Corridor grant program. The New York Metro Signal System Upgrades to 562 Program Phase 1 County to Elmora Project is crucial for improving railroad efficiency, reliability, and travel safety between New Brunswick, New Jersey and Elizabeth, New Jersey, including NJ TRANSIT's Northeast Corridor and North Jersey Coast Line services.

The project scope includes an existing signal system in operation between the County and Elmora interlockings in New Jersey along the NEC. This system is a traditional Northeast Operating Rules Advisory Committee (NORAC) rule 251/261 compliant system, which relies on manual speed control and braking by train engineers. A new NORAC 562 territory will modernize the signal system, shifting to automatic speed controls, which will improve safety, reliability, efficiency, and travel time by optimizing the block space utilization and upgrading current equipment with modern components. With added operational flexibility afforded by the new signal system, Amtrak will be able to improve the reliability and performance of both Amtrak and NJT trains in this vital section of the NEC.

I ask that you give all due consideration to this meritorious grant proposal, and I thank you in advance for your attention to this important project. Should you have any questions, please contact me or my staff at (973) 639-8700.

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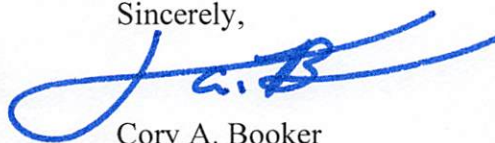
I write in support of the application submitted jointly by Amtrak and NJ TRANSIT (NJT) to the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) Federal-State Partnership Intercity Passenger Rail – Northeast Corridor grant program for the Sawtooth Bridges Replacement Project Final Design Supplement and Pre-Construction Support Services Project. This project will improve the consistency, quality, and reliability of Amtrak and NJT services that run on the Northeast Corridor (NEC).

The Sawtooth Bridges Replacement Project Final Design Supplement and Pre-Construction Support Services Project will allow for the full replacement of the existing three Sawtooth Bridges and the addition of two tracks that represent a critical link and significant bottleneck with minimal impacts or risks to future costs, schedule, and rail operations. Amtrak determined the most effective way to reconstruct the Sawtooth Bridges is to utilize a Construction Manager at Risk, which will allow Amtrak to transfer elements of the construction cost and schedule risk to the Construction Manager.

By providing funding to support the pre-construction and Final Design activities of the Sawtooth Bridges Replacement Project now, FRA will be supporting collaboration between Amtrak and its contractors when it can have the greatest impact to construction cost and time savings in the future. A completed project will achieve a state of good repair and improve the reliability and resiliency of rail service along this critical segment and preserve the current functionality of Amtrak's NEC service, NJT's commuter rail service, and the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey's PATH transit service.

I ask that you give all due consideration to this meritorious grant proposal, and I thank you in advance for your attention to this important project. Should you have any questions, please contact me or my staff at (973) 639-8700.

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