

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

May 13, 2022

The Honorable Brian Schatz
Chair
Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on
Transportation, Housing and Urban
Development, and Related Agencies
722 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Susan Collins
Ranking Member
Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on
Transportation, Housing and Urban
Development, and Related Agencies
413 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Schatz and Ranking Member Collins:

We share your commitment to investing in our country's rail infrastructure and working in a bipartisan way to rebuild our nation's transportation systems. To that end, we write to request that the Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvements (CRISI) grant program receive the fully authorized level of funding included in the recently passed Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act.

In 2015, Congress created the CRISI grant program in a bipartisan effort to invest in critical rail projects throughout the country. By providing grant awards, CRISI allows rural and urban communities to leverage the power of private, state and local dollars to advance capital rail projects, improve the backbone of the freight and passenger rail systems, and advance safety measures. By facilitating those changes, the program assists in the creation of good-paying jobs and a safer, more robust rail network.

Since the first awards in 2017, CRISI has led to \$1.2 billion in investments in 44 states.¹ We understand the tremendous value these grants can bring to so many communities – large and small, urban and rural. CRISI advances major rehabilitation and maintenance projects that shore up first-mile and last-mile connections served by short line railroads, allowing goods to move more seamlessly to and from market. These improvements directly benefit small businesses and spur growth in our country's manufacturing and agricultural base. CRISI enhances American competitiveness by reducing delays and costs to businesses and consumers and strengthening

¹ The 44 states that have benefited from one of 184 awards include Alabama, Alaska, Arkansas, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, Vermont, Virginia, Washington, and Wisconsin.

weak spots in the supply chain. CRISI bolsters safety, allowing communities to invest in safety technology, boost training, and obtain systems that protect all who work on and rely upon the rail network. Finally, CRISI helps mitigate congestion and remove bottlenecks, thereby reducing emissions and promoting a more efficient use of transportation resources, taking vehicles off our highways while reducing wear and tear on worn-out roads.

In 2021, Congress passed the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) and expanded CRISI's scale in recognition of the outstanding need for further investment in the successful program. In addition to the \$1 billion per year Congress provided in advance appropriations to advance many critical projects, Congress also authorized an additional \$1 billion per year. Thanks to your leadership, the recent Fiscal Year 2022 omnibus bill provided \$625 million for CRISI pursuant to the new, heightened authorization level. The Biden administration's Fiscal Year 2023 U.S. Department of Transportation request seeks \$500 million. While this investment is significant, **we urge you to help realize the potential of this program under the new law and fund CRISI at the fully authorized level in the Fiscal Year 2023 Transportation, Housing and Urban Development spending bill.** This funding level would maximize the capacity of the program, further reduce bottlenecks in the supply chain, create good-paying jobs, and ensure a safer transportation network. CRISI has been instrumental in revitalizing the national rail network to date and its flexible structure means a fully funded CRISI program would continue to be a boon to states and communities throughout the country moving forward.

We appreciate your leadership on so many important transportation issues and look forward to working with you to ensure Congress delivers on the programs that are so critical to those we represent.


Sincerely,



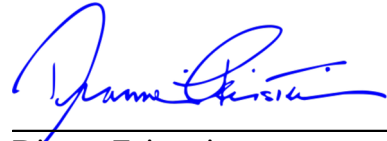
Robert P. Casey, Jr.
United States Senator



Raphael G. Warnock
United States Senator



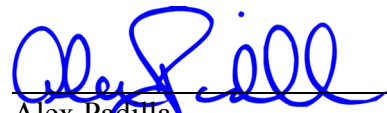
Tammy Duckworth
United States Senator



Dianne Feinstein
United States Senator



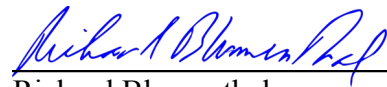
Chris Van Hollen
United States Senator



Alex Padilla
United States Senator



Elizabeth Warren
United States Senator



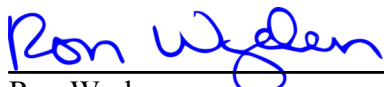
Richard Blumenthal
United States Senator



Cory A. Booker
United States Senator



Jacky Rosen
United States Senator



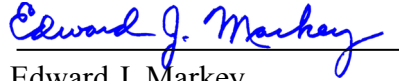
Ron Wyden
United States Senator



Tammy Baldwin
United States Senator



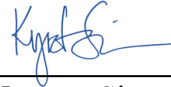
Bernard Sanders
United States Senator



Edward J. Markey
United States Senator



Benjamin L. Cardin
United States Senator



Kyrsten Sinema
United States Senator