

ROBERT P. CASEY, JR.  
PENNSYLVANIA

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# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

April 19, 2023

The Honorable Pete Buttigieg  
Secretary of Transportation  
US Department of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE  
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary Buttigieg,

I write today in support of the application from the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT) to the Federal Railroad Administration's (FRA) Fiscal Year 2022-2023 Federal-State Partnership for Intercity Passenger Rail Program ("Fed-State") for its *Pennsylvanian* Rail Modernization: Expanding Amtrak Passenger Rail Service on the Keystone West Corridor." I urge you to give this application full and fair consideration.

Amtrak's *Pennsylvanian* route has once-daily round trip service between Pittsburgh and New York City, with intermediate stops in cities like Harrisburg, Philadelphia, Trenton, and Newark. This route also provides passenger rail service for smaller and mid-sized cities in Central and Western Pennsylvania, including Johnstown, Altoona, Lewistown, and Greensburg.

Given the *Pennsylvanian*'s important role in the Commonwealth's transportation network, I understand that PennDOT is working towards adding a second daily round trip along the route. PennDOT officials have told me that they have already made significant progress towards this goal through negotiations with Norfolk Southern, the owner of tracks between Harrisburg and Pittsburgh, and using increased transportation funding through the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA). However, I am informed that there are still significant outstanding capital needs that must be addressed to bring this project to fruition.

I understand that PennDOT is seeking funding from the Fed-State program to implement several infrastructure projects that will allow for a second train to run daily without interfering with the freight traffic that also uses this line. PennDOT officials have told me that this includes the construction of a third mainline between Harrisburg and Rockville and between Gray and Altoona, upgrades to crossovers at Johnstown, the installation of new crossovers at Mifflin and Hawstone, and upgrades and extensions to the spur track in Pittsburgh.

This is a major opportunity for the Commonwealth to expand transportation options to residents across Pennsylvania and provide a meaningful, convenient alternative for those without cars. Increased rail service will create jobs and economic opportunities for residents in major cities and rural communities alike. While IIJA funding has laid the groundwork for this project already, funding from the Fed-State program will be vital to taking the next step and making this service a reality.

Thank you in advance for consideration of my views. Please include this letter in the official record of the application. Consistent with applicable laws, rules, and regulations, I also respectfully request that you keep me informed of the status of this grant application. Finally, if you have any questions, comments, or concerns, please feel free to contact me or my staff at (202) 224-6324.

Sincerely,



Robert P. Casey, Jr.  
United States Senator