

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20510**

January 12, 2017

Administrator Sarah Feinberg  
U.S. Department of Transportation  
Federal Railroad Administration  
1200 New Jersey Avenue, Southeast  
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Administrator Feinberg:

Last month, the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) unveiled the Tier 1 Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the agency's NEC FUTURE effort, a draft plan for re-building and re-aligning rail between Washington, DC and Boston. We are strong supporters of making much-needed investments in the Northeast Corridor so it is safer, more dependable, and offers improved mobility for millions of travelers across the region.

The Tier 1 Final EIS presents a bold vision of more trains, faster trip times, and improved connections between key destinations. We are particularly appreciative of the renewed emphasis of the importance of the Hartford Line. However, the plan also contains elements that we, as well as many of our constituents, find particularly worrisome. Moreover, some of these elements have changed dramatically from the initial Draft EIS that was the subject of thousands of comments earlier this year.

We understand the FRA is undergoing a thirty-day waiting period until January 31, 2017, during which the public may submit further comments. After this period, the agency will release its Record of Decision, referred to as the "Selected Alternative," for possible future implementation. In light of the substantial issues raised in this document and the intervening holiday season, we write urging you to extend this waiting period deadline in order to allow the public to comment for four additional weeks to February 28, 2017.

This extension will ensure our constituents have the proper amount of time to evaluate the document and provide necessary, critical feedback. The Tier 1 Final EIS is the culmination of an eight-year, nearly \$40 million undertaking. During one phase of that process, residents and organizations from Connecticut provided more than half of the 3,200 comments your agency received to a series of proposed drafts. Our constituents should be provided ample time to continue to engage in this process and provide the FRA with due thought and consideration concerning the new document.

We appreciate your attention to this important matter, and look forward to your response.

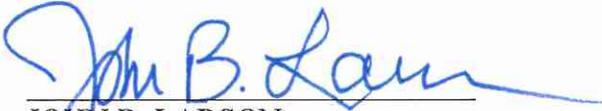
Sincerely,



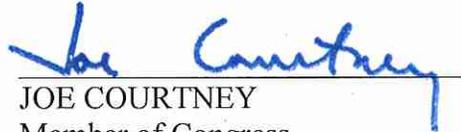
RICHARD BLUMENTHAL  
United States Senate



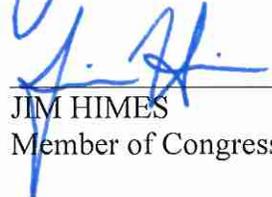
CHRISTOPHER S. MURPHY  
United States Senate



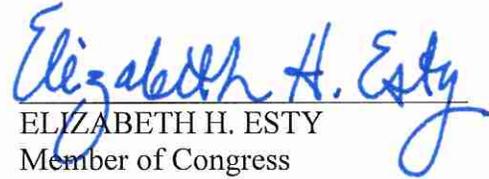
JOHN B. LARSON  
Member of Congress



JOE COURTNEY  
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JIM HIMES  
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