

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

March 15, 2022

The Honorable Pete Buttigieg
Secretary of Transportation
United States Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, Southeast
Washington, D.C. 20590

Re: Amtrak and Connecticut Department of Transportation's Application to the Federal Railroad Administration's State of Good Repair Program

Dear Secretary Buttigieg,

We write to express our strong support for the application submitted by Amtrak and the Connecticut Department of Transportation (CTDOT) under the Fiscal Year (FY) 2021 Federal Railroad Administration's (FRA) Federal-State Partnership for State of Good Repair Program for the Connecticut River Bridge Replacement Project. The joint application seeks supplemental funding beyond the funding provided in Amtrak and CTDOT's FY 2020 State of Good Repair Program award.

The Connecticut River Bridge carries Amtrak and CTDOT trains between Old Saybrook and Old Lyme, Connecticut. Completed in 1907, it is the oldest movable bridge on the north end of the Northeast Corridor. Replacing the bridge is a priority for Amtrak and the state of Connecticut, as more than 50 trains cross the bridge daily, including Amtrak's Acela and Northeast Regional service, CTDOT's Shore Line East trains, and recreational boats navigate under the bridge on the Connecticut River throughout the year.

Unfortunately, the Connecticut River Bridge has outlived its 100-year intended lifespan. Many key elements of the bridge have reached the end of their design life and require extensive maintenance to remain in operable condition. Speeds on the bridge are restricted to 45 miles per hour, and the frequent opening and closing of the bridge – over 3,000 times per year – puts high demands on its aging components. Replacing this bridge would reduce maintenance costs, offer higher speeds, and improve reliability for both railway and marine traffic.

These federal funds will complement significant investments already made by CTDOT and Amtrak, as well as the nearly \$66 million FY 2020 Federal-State Partnership for State of Good Repair Program award. Together, this funding will allow Amtrak and CTDOT to fully replace the Connecticut River Bridge with a new design and new alignment parallel to and south of the existing bridge, relocate submarine cable, and construct retaining walls and a new alignment for the embankment. This will address current operating challenges and greatly improve future conditions; improve commuter, intercity, and freight fluidity and capacity up and down the corridor; and strengthen the long-term resiliency and sustainability of this critical asset to support continued growth and mobility in the region.

We strongly encourage you to consider this meritorious project for funding through the FY 2021 FRA State of Good Repair Program. Your agency's time and consideration of this proposal is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

RICHARD BLUMENTHAL
United States Senate



CHRISTOPHER S. MURPHY
United States Senate



JOE COURTNEY
Member of Congress



ROSA L. DELAURO
Member of Congress