COMMITTEES:
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EDUCATION AND LABOR
SUBCOMMITTEES:
HIGHER EDUCATION AND WORKFORCE INVESTMENT
HEALTH, EMPLOYMENT, LABOR, AND PENSIONS

Joe Courtney
Congress of the United States
2nd District, Connecticut

WASHINGTON OFFICE:
2449 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515
P (202) 225-2076
F (202) 225-4977

DISTRICT OFFICES:
55 MAIN STREET, SUITE 250
NORWICH, CT 06360
P (860) 886-0139
F (860) 886-2974

77 HAZARD AVENUE, UNIT J
ENFIELD, CT 06082
P (860) 741-6011
F (860) 741-6036

February 4, 2022

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

Mr. Stephen J. Gardner
President and Chief Executive Officer
Amtrak
1 Massachusetts Ave., NW, Third Floor
Washington, D.C. 20001

Mr. Mitch Warren
Executive Director
Northeast Corridor Commission
10 G Street, NE, Suite 360
Washington, D.C. 20002

The Honorable Joseph J. Giulietti
Commissioner
Connecticut Department of Transportation
2800 Berlin Turnpike, PO Box 317546
Newington, CT 06131

Dear Administrator Bose, President and CEO Gardner, Executive Director Warren, and Commissioner Giulietti:

The *Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act*, which I had the honor to vote for, includes the largest investment in passenger rail since the creation of Amtrak more than fifty years ago. Along the Northeast Corridor, which crosses the shoreline of the second Congressional district, many of our bridges, as you know, are more than a century old. I would like to call your attention to one bridge, located in my district, that should become a prime candidate for long overdue replacement and the highest priority from the FRA, Amtrak, and the Northeast Corridor Commission, namely, the Connecticut River Bridge.

As you well know, the Connecticut River Bridge was completed 115 years ago, in 1907, and is the oldest movable bridge between New Haven, Connecticut, and Boston, Massachusetts. The bridge's age and deterioration have resulted in significant delays and disruption to both rail and marine traffic.

I understand that Amtrak and the Northeast Corridor Commission are currently working to prioritize projects and that the Northeast Corridor Commission has already identified $117 billion worth of projects to focus on over the next fifteen years. Within those $117 billion in projects, the NEC Capital Investment Plan for FY2022-2026 notes that the Connecticut River Bridge Replacement is one of the projects which could advance to construction in FY2022-2026

if additional funding were made available due to its significance and potential to improve service reliability along the Northeast Corridor.

My staff and I have been in touch with Amtrak about this project we have recently learned from Amtrak that procurement of the third-party construction contractor is anticipated to start in the Spring of 2022 and construction is anticipated to start in the Spring of 2023, while the environmental and permitting submissions are ongoing and pending approvals.

As your agencies embark on implementation of the IIJA, a few specific actions will ensure the Connecticut River Bridge is able to benefit from this incredible joint effort and is included as one of the top priority bridges for inclusion in the first iteration of funds. Specifically, I encourage Amtrak to allocate funds in the supplemental appropriations received through the IIJA for the purpose of repairing and replacing aging bridges in the Northeast, including the Connecticut River Bridge.

Additionally, it is my hope that FRA will include the Connecticut River Bridge in the detailed spending plan report to House and Senate Appropriations Committees about projects to be funded using the supplemental appropriations to Amtrak in the IIJA, which is due within 180 days of enactment, and annually thereafter. I encourage FRA to remember to include the Connecticut River Bridge as a major capital renewal backlog project (as referenced by the third proviso under the heading "Northeast Corridor Grants to the National Railroad Passenger Corporation" in Division J). Furthermore, as part of FRA's "Northeast Corridor Project Inventory" to determine priority for competitive discretionary grants (Section 22307(a)(4), codified in 49 U.S.C. §24911(e)), I am requesting that the Connecticut River Bridge be included as a priority project.

Lastly, as the Connecticut Department of Transportation ushers this historic investment through our State, my staff and I stand ready to help the Department ensure that all application materials are ready to be submitted and that this project is as close to shovel-ready as possible when the federal agencies open applications.

This project is extremely important to our region. Over the past several years, I have led and engaged in numerous efforts to expedite the replacement of the bridge. In July of 2020, I wrote to former FRA Administrator Batory requesting strong support for the application submitted by Amtrak and the Connecticut Department of Transportation under the FRA's FY2020 Federal-State Partnership for State of Good Repair program to replace the Connecticut River Bridge between Old Saybrook and Old Lyme, Connecticut. After my advocacy for this grant, in October of 2020, Amtrak was awarded a grant of $65.2 million for the Connecticut River Bridge Replacement project. Then in June of last year, I sent a letter to former Amtrak CEO William Flynn and Connecticut Department of Transportation Commissioner Joseph Giulietti requesting that they utilize a Project Labor Agreement for the Connecticut River Bridge replacement project. Amtrak responded to this letter in July of 2021 and noted their support for a Project Labor Agreement in place for the project.

I hope that you all use your authorities to prioritize the repair and rebuild of the Connecticut River Bridge as expeditiously as possible. Support to this project would be a boon for Connecticut commuters and the Northeast region.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

JOE COURTNEY
Member of Congress