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States for
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July 19, 2017

The Honorable John Thune, Chairman
Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation
United States Senate
Dirksen Senate Office Building, Room 511
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Bill Nelson, Ranking Member
Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation
United States Senate
Hart Senate Office Building, Room 716
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Thune and Ranking Member Nelson:

On behalf of the States for Passenger Rail Coalition, Inc. (SPRC), I write in support of the confirmation of Ronald L. Batory as Administrator of the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) for the United States Department of Transportation (USDOT).

The SPRC's mission is to promote the research, development, implementation, operation, sustainability, and expansion of publicly supported intercity passenger rail services. On behalf of its membership representing 25 state departments of transportation and passenger rail authorities, SPRC advocates for ongoing federal funding and programmatic support for intercity passenger rail initiatives, including efforts to improve safety on our nations rail system and at highway-rail-at-grade crossings.

We are impressed with Mr. Batory's extensive experience in the railroad industry and appreciate his plan to improve communications within the agency, and we encourage him to collaborate closely with public and private stakeholders to achieve policy goals. We are especially encouraged by his reputation as a good listener with a sound analytical approach. We commend his affirmation of the need for the FRA to move to performance-based rulemaking and fact-based policy making. Focusing upon these two objectives will strengthen the role of the states in promoting the development of a safe, reliable and efficient vibrant national network of freight and passenger rail services.

We ask that the Committee act speedily to confirm Mr. Batory. The issues facing the railroad industry today are significant, and it is vital that we have an experienced, capable and dedicated leader like Mr. Batory, who is willing to work with the states to make the improvements necessary to build a national rail system with an emphasis on increasing mobility and reliability, while enhancing safety and security now, and in the years to come.

Sincerely,

Paul C. Worley, CPM, Chair
States for Passenger Rail Coalition, Inc.

cc: Mr. Ronald L. Batory

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Connecticut

Illinois

Indiana

Iowa

Louisiana

Massachusetts

Maine

Michigan

Minnesota

Missouri

Nevada

New York

North Carolina

Oklahoma

Oregon

Pennsylvania

Vermont

Virginia

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Joint Powers
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New England
Passenger
Rail Authority*

*LOSSAN Joint Powers
Authority*

*San Joaquin Joint
Powers Authority*