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Vice Chair, *David Kutrosky*, CCJPA
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States for
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July 13, 2015

Senator John Thune, Chairman
Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation
Dirksen Senate Office Building, Room 511
Washington, DC 20510

Senator Bill Nelson, Ranking Member
Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation
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 actions taken by the Commerce Committee to introduce sections of the highway bill. I am particularly pleased that the Railroad Reform, Enhancement, and Efficiency Act (R2E2) - as approved by the Commerce Committee - was included as a title of the bill. SPRC is comprised of state leaders from across the United States and our mission is to promote the research, development, implementation, operation, sustainability, and expansion of publicly-supported intercity passenger rail (IPR) services. The inclusion of rail into the highway bill is a significant step which is recognized and appreciated by our members.

R2E2 will empower state departments of transportation to maximize their resources and make efficient and effective mobility investments that will address the challenges of developing a sustainable, multimodal transportation network that includes state-supported IPR services.

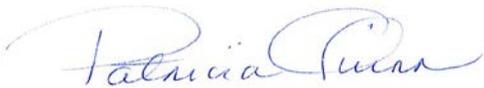
SPRC applauds the Committee's work to enhance safety programs, such as Positive Train Control (PTC), to update the eligibility and application processes for the Railroad Rehabilitation and Improvement Financing (RRIF) program, to streamline environmental requirements, and to provide for an ongoing program of rail research to sustain and grow the industry as a catalyst for innovation.

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We particularly appreciate the Committee's recognition of rail service as an important factor in the economic growth of our nation, and the vital role states play in its development. In 2014, nearly half of Amtrak's riders travelled aboard State/SPRC sponsored routes. Therefore, representation of state-supported services on the Amtrak Board of Directors is critical and will strengthen both the efficiency and quality of the national passenger rail system.

Thank you again for your leadership on this important legislation.

Sincerely,



Patricia Quinn, Chair
States for Passenger Rail Coalition, Inc.