

Chair, **Patricia Quinn**, NNEPRA
Secretary, **Beth Nachreiner**, Maryland DOT
Treasurer, **Paul C. Worley**, North Carolina DOT

States for
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September 15, 2014

The Honorable Bill Shuster
2165 Rayburn HOB
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Nick J. Rahall, II
2307 Rayburn HOB
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Jeff Denham
1730 Longworth HOB
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Corrine Brown
2111 Rayburn HOB
Washington, DC 20515

Re: Passenger Rail Reform and Investment Act of 2014 H.R. 5449

Dear Members,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the introduction of H.R. 5449, the Passenger Rail Reform and Investment Act (PRRIA) of 2014.

These comments are presented by the States for Passenger Rail Coalition, Inc. (SPRC). The SPRC is a coalition of state leaders from across the United States who work together to support the development and growth of intercity passenger rail service in America.

- State-supported routes generate 50 percent of Amtrak's passengers and we provide approximately one-third of Amtrak's budget. We believe the best way to empower states, ensure an equal partnership, and strengthen management oversight is to seat states on the Amtrak Board of Directors.
- The creation of the State-Supported Route Advisory Committee to help oversee implementation of Section 209 of the Passenger Rail Investment and Improvement Act (PRIIA) of 2008 is helpful, and we need to ensure that funding to support the work of the Committee is authorized within USDOT's budget and not left to the states.
- We support the inclusion of a station development goal. Several states have seen first-hand how a new passenger rail station can encourage downtown development. For example, in Illinois the Bloomington-Normal's new multimodal station has led to almost \$200 million in private sector investment in the downtown area.

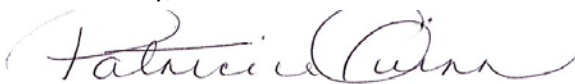
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Rail Authority

- States and commuter agencies along the Northeast Corridor (NEC) contributed over \$214 million in capital and operating funds in FY 2013. With over \$13 billion of major backlog projects, the NEC's federal investment needs outpace what is proposed in PRRIA to bring the corridor up to a state-of-good-repair.
- The Next Generation Corridor Equipment Pool Committee (NGEC), authorized in Section 305 of PRRIA 2008, has produced important work in developing and promulgating standard specifications for passenger rail equipment (passenger cars and locomotives). The work of the NGEC continues throughout the procurement and maintenance life-cycle and the Congress should provide on-going financial support. The responsibility for important oversight, and management functions, as well as on going document control, and additional specification development should be funded at \$1 million per year.
- We support the Railroad Rehabilitation and Improvement Financing (RRIF) initiatives as they will encourage greater use of the program; we very much appreciate the provision making Positive Train Control (PTC) eligible for RRIF financing.
- Thank you for promoting the streamlining of environmental reviews which can help accelerate project delivery. While we honor compliance with environmental rules, all too often they become the project and consume considerable amounts of time to coordinate and complete. Thanks as well for proposing a means of enhancing reviews as part of the historic preservation process.
- We applaud the bill's efforts to provide for development of competitive service options.

We appreciate the work of the Committee in developing this important bipartisan legislation. The SPRC has had the opportunity to meet with staff and provide meaningful input. We look forward to working with you and your staff on the legislation as it moves through the legislative process.

We appreciate the work of the Committee in developing this important bipartisan legislation and we thank you for the opportunity to comment on this legislation.

Sincerely,



Patricia Quinn, Chair

States for Passenger Rail Coalition, Inc.

cc: Joseph H. Boardman, President and CEO, National Railroad Passenger Corporation
Joseph C. Szabo, Administrator, Federal Railroad Administration