

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Ray LaHood
Secretary
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave, SE
Washington, DC 20590

March 4, 2011

Dear Secretary LaHood,

In light of the State of Florida's re-affirmed decision to reject a \$2.4 billion High-Speed Intercity Passenger Rail Program award, we urge you to reprogram this funding to projects along the Northeast Corridor. Our districts stand ready to seize this critical opportunity to improve the speed and efficiency of passenger rail service. Reprogramming the award would create jobs and alleviate congestion in the Northeast, without adding to the current deficit.

As the nation's most densely populated transportation corridor, the Northeast Corridor has a well-established passenger rail infrastructure. However, that infrastructure is dated and overburdened. Federal investments could quickly be leveraged to improve mobility in a way that serves not just regional, but indeed national interests.

Simply put, the Northeast Corridor is the strongest candidate for high speed rail investments in this country. Our highways and airports – from Washington, D.C. to Boston, Massachusetts – lack the capacity to meet current mobility demands at a level conducive to competitiveness and growth. Americans waste time and fuel making trips along the Northeast that could be undertaken most efficiently by high speed rail.

Amtrak's Acela Express has demonstrated ample demand for high speed American rail service: in its nine-year history, ridership has grown by six hundred percent. Yet we have not made commitments to sufficiently meet that demand. High-Speed Intercity Passenger Rail funding in the Northeast Corridor is an effective and responsible way to leverage scarce federal dollars.

The best chance for high speed rail in the United States is to build upon what works. Given the population and economic potential of the region, timely and targeted high speed rail projects are a sound investment that will pay enormous dividends.

We appreciate your consideration of this request, and look forward to continuing to work with you modernize America's transportation infrastructure.

Sincerely,



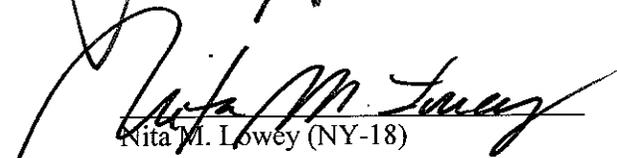
John C. Carney, Jr. (DE-AL)



Michael G. Grimm (NY-13)


James A. Himes (CT-04)


Gerald E. Connolly (VA-11)

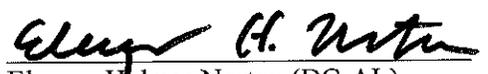

Nita M. Lowey (NY-18)


Edolphus Towns (NY-10)

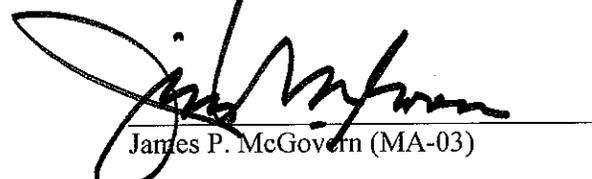

Robert E. Andrews (NJ-01)


James P. Moran (VA-08)

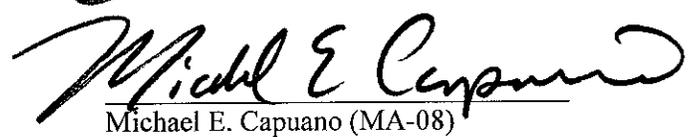

Donald M. Payne (NJ-10)


Eleanor Holmes Norton (DC-AL)

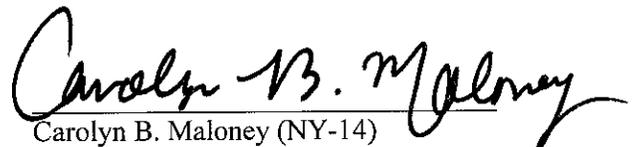

William R. Keating (MA-10)

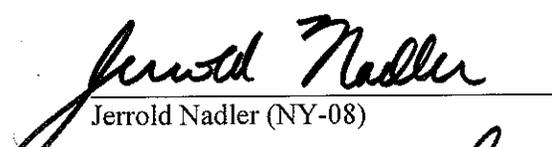

James P. McGovern (MA-03)

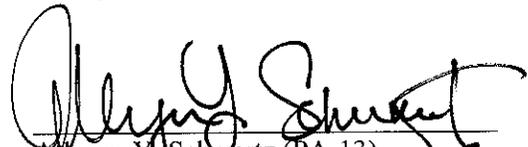

C.A. Dutch Ruppersberg (MD-02)


Michael E. Capuano (MA-08)


Steven R. Rothman (NJ-09)


Carolyn B. Maloney (NY-14)

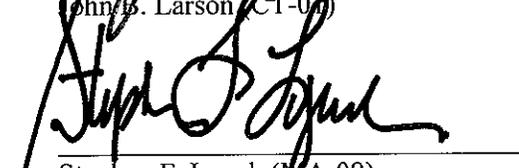

Jerrold Nadler (NY-08)

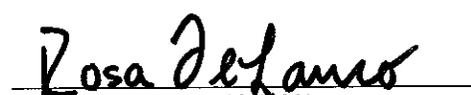

Anyson Y. Schwartz (PA-13)

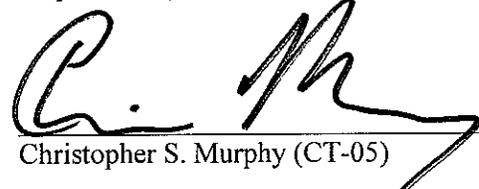

Albio Sires (NJ-13)


John B. Larson (CT-07)


John W. Olver (MA-01)

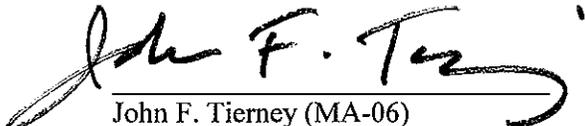

Stephen F. Lynch (MA-09)


Rosa L. DeLauro (CT-03)


Christopher S. Murphy (CT-05)


Chris Van Hollen (MD-08)


John P. Sarbanes (MD-03)

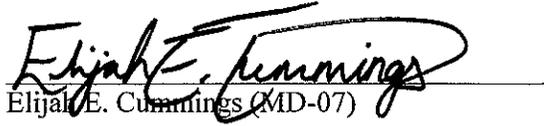

John F. Tierney (MA-06)

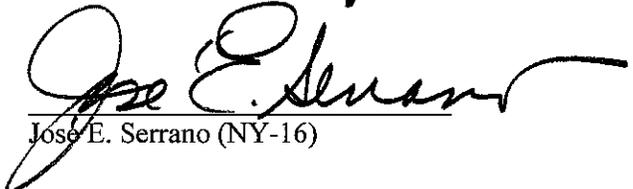

Joe Courtney (CT-02)


Jim Gerlach (PA-06)


Gary L. Ackerman (NY-05)


Bill Pascrell, Jr. (NJ-08)

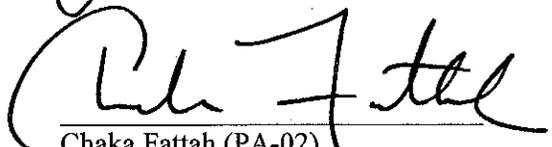

Elijah E. Cummings (MD-07)


Jose E. Serrano (NY-16)


Anthony D. Weiner (NY-09)


James R. Langevin (RI-02)


Michael G. Fitzpatrick (PA-08)


Chaka Fattah (PA-02)


David N. Cicilline (RI-01)

