

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

April 6, 2017

The Honorable Susan Collins  
Chairwoman  
Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on  
Transportation, Housing and Urban  
Development, and Related Agencies  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Jack Reed  
Ranking Member  
Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on  
Transportation, Housing and Urban  
Development, and Related Agencies  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Chairwoman Collins and Ranking Member Reed,

As you develop the Fiscal Year (FY) 2018 Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies (THUD) Appropriations bill, we write to respectfully request \$175 million in funding for the Federal-State Partnership for State of Good Repair (SGR) Program and \$230 million in funding for the Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvements (CRISI) Program. Together the SGR and CRISI Programs enhance the safety and reliability of our nation's passenger and freight rail networks while maximizing the return of federal investments. Our requested funding levels for these programs are consistent with the levels of funding authorized for these programs for FY 2018 in the Fixing America's Surface Transportation (*FAST*) Act.

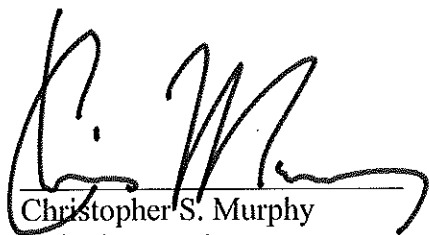
America's passenger and freight rail networks form the backbone of our economy. From the freight and state-supported passenger rail routes in rural America to the nation's busiest passenger rail system in the Northeast Corridor (NEC), tens of millions of Americans rely on our rail system to safely and reliably move people and goods across our country. In particular, the economic impact of the Northeast Corridor (NEC) cannot be overstated: seven million jobs are located within five miles of a station on the line; workers who ride the NEC contribute \$50 million annually to the U.S. economy; and a loss of the NEC for a single day would cost the U.S. \$100 million in travel delays and lost productivity. However, as the full Committee noted in its report accompanying the FY 2017 THUD bill, the NEC has a state of good repair backlog of over \$28 billion. The NEC's most heavily trafficked bridges and tunnels are well over a century old. Moreover, because service levels have virtually reached capacity, even more investments will be required to expand service to meet projected increases in ridership and to fully realize the transformative potential of the NEC.

Congress strongly affirmed its commitment for robust investments in passenger rail in the NEC by passing the *FAST* Act in December 2015 with broad bipartisan support in both the House and Senate. As you know, the bill included the five-year authorization of both passenger and freight rail transportation programs, thereby bringing all surface transportation modes together within a single authorization bill for the first time. The bill included a new grant program—CRISI—to improve rail safety and reliability and to expand the use of life-saving Positive Train Control technology. The bill also included a critical new grant program—SGR—to incent collaboration among stakeholders in the NEC and along many of the country's most important passenger routes. Unfortunately, to date, Congress has yet to appropriate funds to the *FAST* Act's newly

authorized rail accounts. As you recall, the *FAST* Act was signed into law shortly before Congress passed the FY 2016 Omnibus spending bill, and to date Congress has not passed an FY 2017 spending bill. We strongly feel that we cannot let the third year of this widely supported five-year authorization pass by without appropriating these programs to their authorized levels.

On behalf of our millions of constituents who depend on a safe a reliable rail network, we urge you to fund the SGR and CRISI Programs in the FY 2018 THUD Appropriations bill at levels consistent with the *FAST* Act levels for these programs for FY 2018. We appreciate your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,



Christopher S. Murphy  
United States Senator



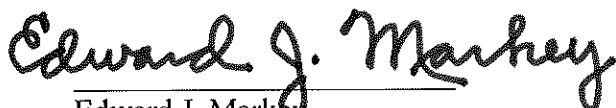
Richard Blumenthal  
United States Senator



Robert P. Casey, Jr.  
United States Senator



Thomas R. Carper  
United States Senator



Edward J. Markey  
United States Senator



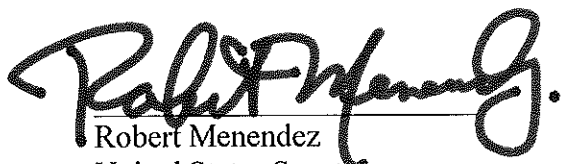
Christopher A. Coons  
United States Senator



Benjamin L. Cardin  
United States Senator



Cory A. Booker  
United States Senator



Robert Menendez  
United States Senator