

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

November 9, 2016

The Honorable Stephanie Pollack
Secretary and Chief Executive Officer
Massachusetts Department of Transportation
10 Park Plaza, Suite 4160
Boston, MA 02116

Dear Secretary Pollack:

As input to the Massachusetts State Rail Plan, we write in strong support for the expansion of intercity passenger rail service north from Springfield to Holyoke, Northampton and Greenfield, Massachusetts on the Knowledge Corridor and to express our support for the recommendations detailed in the Northern New England Intercity Rail Initiative (NNEIRI) study which outlines the benefits and impact of adding additional intercity passenger rail service on the Inland Route and the Boston-to-Montreal Route.

The expansion of intercity passenger rail service along this route would leverage the over \$100 million investment in the Massachusetts section of the Knowledge Corridor by providing more rail travel options beyond the lone Vermonter train that currently serves these stations. More specifically, we would like MassDOT to work with Amtrak and ConnDOT to extend New Haven-Springfield shuttle trains and implement this service with regional partner coordination as quickly as possible.

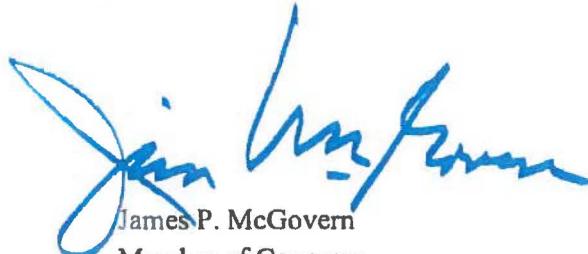
Consistent with the findings and recommendation of the Northern New England Intercity Rail Initiative (NNEIRI) final report, we strongly encourage MassDOT to advance the planning and engineering of the Inland Route service from Boston to Springfield and south to Connecticut. That MassDOT study recommends eight (8) daily roundtrips in the corridor, but currently lacks funding to help advance this critical project. Among other benefits, the Inland Route would provide critical market connections for our Commonwealth's second (Worcester) and third (Springfield) largest cities – Worcester travelers would be able to take trains to Connecticut and New York City, and Springfield travelers would have frequent and reliable service to Boston.

It is our sincere hope that MassDOT will continue to be a strong partner on this effort now and in the years to come. Thank you for your time and attention. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact us.

Sincerely,

A blue ink signature of Richard E. Neal's name.

Richard E. Neal
Member of Congress

A blue ink signature of James P. McGovern's name.

James P. McGovern
Member of Congress

Cc: Astrid Glynn, Rail & Transit Administrator MassDOT