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Select Greater Philadelphia
Staten Island Chamber of
Commerce
Washington D.C. Convention &
Tourism Corporation

June 22, 2010

The Honorable Ray LaHood
Secretary
United States Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary LaHood,

The Business Alliance for Northeast Mobility urges you to fully fund and lead the \$18.8 million Northeast Corridor Multi-Modal High Speed Rail Improvement Plan. This proposal, the result of collaboration among 11 states and Amtrak to plan for the future of the nation's most congested intercity and commuter rail corridor, represents an historic collaboration and a necessary step to bring the Northeast's rail infrastructure into the 21st century. Upgrading intercity rail service is critical to the long-term economic competitiveness of the Northeast Megaregion and indeed, the entire nation.

The Business Alliance for Northeast Mobility is a coalition of more than 30 of the leading business and civic groups from Maine to Virginia, dedicated to improve the mobility of the megaregion. The Business Alliance strongly supports the current proposal's focus on the main line Northeast Corridor, which is the backbone of the megaregion's rail network and its nearly \$3 trillion economy. The study will explore investments needed to meet travel demand in the Northeast Corridor, including both incremental improvements and investments in dedicated tracks for true high-speed service.

More than fifty percent of all intercity rail ridership in the nation occurs on the Northeast Corridor between Boston and Washington DC. The corridor also carries hundreds of millions of daily commuters each year in five of the largest metropolitan regions in the country. In a region with proven intercity rail demand, limited ability to expand capacity in its road and aviation networks, and an economy that generates 20 percent of the U.S. GDP, it must be a national priority to bring high-speed rail to this corridor.

With intercity, commuter, and freight operations all sharing a single piece of infrastructure, the Northeast corridor is perhaps the most complex rail corridor in the world. To be successful, planning in this environment must be coordinated and inclusive. The Business Alliance commends all the 11 states and Amtrak for submitting their proposal. We hope you will exercise your leadership and fully fund this three year planning process. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Robert Yaro
President, Regional Plan Association
Co-Chair, Business Alliance for Northeast
Mobility

Robert Wonderling
President and CEO, Greater Philadelphia
Chamber of Commerce
Chairman, CEO Council for Growth
Co-Chair, Business Alliance for Northeast
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Managing Director/Secretary to the Board
General Contractors Association of New York

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Greater Baltimore Committee

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Vice President, Corporate Development
AECOM

Cc: Joseph Szabo, Karen Rae, Polly Trottenberg