



May 18, 2022

The Honorable Pete Buttigieg
Secretary of Transportation
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, S.E.
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary Buttigieg,

This letter is to express support for the Virginia Passenger Rail Authority (VPRA)'s submission of an application for the US Department of Transportation's Multimodal Project Discretionary Grant opportunity for the design and construction of the New Long Bridge Rail Capacity Expansion Project (Project).

This Project will enhance the multimodal transportation network by addressing a critical railroad bottleneck on the East Coast between the Northeast Corridor (NEC) and the Southeast rail corridor (SEC). It will construct a new publicly owned two-track rail bridge adjacent to the existing CSX owned Long Bridge across the Potomac River. When complete, the Project will grow the existing two-track bridge into a four-track corridor providing additional long-term capacity for the growing intercity passenger rail and commuter rail services between the NEC, Virginia, and points south in North Carolina and beyond. The additional capacity created by this Project will enable the separation of passenger and freight rail traffic, thereby improving service reliability, and will enhance interoperability for freight and passenger rail service on both bridges to ensure network resiliency and redundancy.

Virginia, in partnership with the Federal Railroad Administration and District Department of Transportation, completed a Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) assessment for the Project with a Final Record of Decision in August 2020. The four-track expansion design which was the preferred alternative of the FEIS and includes a pedestrian bridge proposed as Final Section 4(f) environmental mitigation for this Project is truly a multimodal improvement to the national transportation infrastructure. The enhanced multimodal bridge network will connect the thriving regional network in Virginia and the District of Columbia with a safer, higher capacity, and more efficient route. This Project will deliver a sustainable and equitable transportation option by enabling enhanced passenger, commuter, and freight rail services for people and goods moving regionally, throughout the East Coast, and even traveling west into the nation's Heartland.

Please accept this letter of recommendation as an indication of our support for the VPRA's request for the USDOT MPDG funding opportunity for design and construction of the New Long Bridge Capacity Expansion Project to enhance multimodal transportation options and to ensure the Long Bridge Corridor continues to serve as a critical link connecting the local, regional, and national transportation network. And thank you for your consideration and support of multimodal transportation options.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kate Bates". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Kate Bates
President & CEO