

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

July 13, 2018

The Honorable Elaine L. Chao
Secretary
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary Chao:

We write to encourage you to give due consideration to the Massachusetts Department of Transportation's application for Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development (BUILD) grant program funding. The New England Central Railroad "Closing The Gap" Freight Rail Upgrade Project would upgrade the New England Central Railroad main line through Massachusetts to handle industry standard 286,000 lb. freight cars. It is the last piece of a multi-year, multi-state effort that will open up the entire New England Central corridor from the Port of New London to the Canadian border to handle these modern freight cars.

This project would create a significant north-south heavy rail capacity corridor in Massachusetts, dramatically increasing the ability of industry in our Commonwealth, and indeed along the entire corridor, to compete and serve their customers. It would enhance the ability of communities along the corridor to attract and maintain industry in the region, and would be a permanent, major improvement in freight mobility throughout Massachusetts and New England.

Federal investment in this important project would complement other federal investment along the corridor, helping ensure taxpayers receive the greatest value for their investment in our nation's infrastructure. Numerous earlier Recovery Act and TIGER federal grants helped upgrade this line in Vermont, New Hampshire, and Connecticut. This is the last section, and a BUILD grant will complete this long-term effort to expand the capacity of the entire line.

We thank you for considering this proposal. If you would like additional information about our request, please feel free to contact Daniel Greene (202-224-2742) in Senator Markey's office.

Sincerely,



Edward J. Markey
United States Senator



Elizabeth Warren
United States Senator



Richard E. Neal
Member of Congress



James P. McGovern
Member of Congress