



New Hampshire Department of
**BUSINESS AND
ECONOMIC AFFAIRS**

Division of Economic Development

646 Union Street, Littleton, NH

November 26, 2022

Amit Bose, Administrator
Federal Railroad Administration
United States Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave SE
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Administrator Bose:

I would like to express very strong support for the Vermont Agency Of Transportation's Federal Railroad Administration Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvements (CRISI) grant application, "Tri-State Regional Rail Upgrade Project."

The St. Lawrence & Atlantic Railroad (SLR) is partnering with the states of Vermont, New Hampshire, and Maine on this grant project. The Vermont Agency of Transportation (VTRANS) is the lead applicant for the application. Matching funds are being provided by the States of NH and ME, as well as the SLR to make the project an innovative public-private partnership. After years of investment in this corridor by the State of New Hampshire and the SLR, this is the final work needed to complete the three-state modern heavy haul rail freight corridor and provide 286,000 lb. railcar weight capacity to current and future New Hampshire businesses. Railcar shipments are currently restricted to 263,000 lbs. which results in inefficient shipment of partially loaded freight cars. This puts our State at a competitive disadvantage.

The SLR mainline will receive new, heavier welded rail, ties, and ballast. This project will continue efforts by the SLR and the three states over many years to upgrade the SLR main line into a state of good repair, enhance safety, and allow fully loaded modern rail car shipments,

Rural communities especially in the North Country of New Hampshire are in need of preserving and reviving businesses that employ their residents. Having access to the national rail network is very important for supply chain efficiency. This region of the state does not have access to the Interstate highway system, making the preservation and modernization of this rail corridor even more a priority.

I ask that you please give this CRISI application serious consideration for selection and award.

With warm regards,

Benoit Lamontagne
Business Retention, Expansion & Recruitment