

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

November 23, 2022

The Honorable Amit Bose
Administrator, Federal Railroad Administrator
United States Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Subject: Tri-State Regional Rail Upgrade CRISI Project

Dear Administrator Bose:

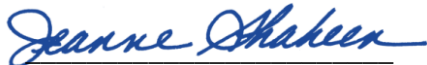
We write in strong support of the Tri-State Regional Rail Upgrade proposal submitted by the Vermont Department of Transportation for funding from the Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvements Program (CRISI). Federal aid from CRISI would facilitate the completion of upgrades to the St. Lawrence & Atlantic Railroad, a 162 mile track from the Vermont-Canadian border that crosses through New Hampshire to its terminus in Auburn, Maine. This project also enjoys strong support from the New Hampshire and Maine Departments of Transportation.

The St. Lawrence & Atlantic Railroad has worked with state and federal partners over the last eighteen years to upgrade its infrastructure to accommodate fully loaded modern freight cars. Prior to this effort, railcars were subject to weight restrictions because of the 'non-controlled cooled' method used to produce the original rail in the early 1900s. This limitation hindered the ability of local and regional businesses to take advantage of a competitive shipping and supply chain alternative to trucking.

With support from CRISI, the Vermont Department of Transportation would work in partnership with St. Lawrence & Atlantic Railroad and the New Hampshire and Maine Departments of Transportation to complete upgrades to the railroad so it meets the national 286,000 lb. freight car standard. This effort would not only benefit existing businesses who would utilize a viable freight rail corridor; access to a safe and modern rail system would also help to attract new businesses to a primarily rural region that recently witnessed a significant decline in manufacturing jobs.

These infrastructure improvements would ensure that local and regional businesses in northern New England could ship their goods and materials via rail in a safe and efficient manner. While we realize you may receive a number of competitive applications, we urge you to give the Tri-State Regional Rail Upgrade proposal full consideration consistent with all appropriate laws and regulations. Thank you for your time and attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



Jeanne Shaheen
United States Senator



Margaret Wood Hassan
United States Senator



Ann McLane Kuster
Member of Congress