



Mayor Lisa Brown

July 24, 2025

The Honorable Sean Duffy, Secretary
US Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave., SE
Washington, DC 20590

Secretary Duffy,

Thank you for your steadfast commitment to expanding and modernizing America's passenger rail network.

I urge you to work closely with Amtrak to expedite the procurement of new coaches and sleepers for the long-distance network—beginning with replacements for the aging Superliner equipment serving routes in the western United States. The current fleet is insufficient to meet passenger demand and continues to shrink as equipment reaches the end of its service life or is sidelined by accidents. As a result, thousands of travelers are turned away each year due to lack of capacity.

This issue is not new—replacement orders should have been initiated years ago. The recent discovery of advanced corrosion in Horizon cars, which led to their complete withdrawal from service, underscores the growing vulnerability of Amtrak's equipment base and serves as a clear warning signal.

Amtrak's long-distance trains are indispensable to regional and national mobility. Spokane, Washington was built on the foundation of rail travel and transport, historically linking the Midwest to the Pacific Coast with frequent, comprehensive service. Rail fills a critical role in connecting to rural communities with metropolitan centers like Spokane, providing safe and convenient single-seat rides across numerous city pairs. These services offer unparalleled efficiency and access, especially for working-class Americans.

To ensure long-distance service is preserved and strengthened, the new fleet should incorporate proven designs, emphasize durability and reliability, and leverage the existing American supply chain wherever possible. Simplicity and functionality should guide interior design, with a focus on the needs of everyday travelers.

A Better Way Starts Here

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We also urge you to collaborate with Congress to secure the necessary funding for timely deployment of new trainsets, coupled with strong oversight and accountability measures. Accelerating these investments will provide a safer, modern onboard experience, on equipment built, operated, and maintained by American workers. It is essential for the long-term viability of these rail services that Congress continue to support these investments in our domestic manufacturing industry and the associated supply chain.

Thank you for your attention to this urgent matter, and for your continued leadership in shaping a more connected nation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lisa Brown". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Lisa" and last name "Brown" clearly distinguishable.

Lisa Brown
Mayor, City of Spokane