



September 23, 2025

Secretary Sean Duffy
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary Duffy,

On behalf of the Portsmouth Area Chamber of Commerce, thank you for your steadfast commitment to expanding and modernizing America's passenger rail network. Reliable rail service is vital to the economic strength of communities like ours, supporting both mobility and growth.

We urge the Department of Transportation 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 national mobility and commerce. They serve as critical lifelines to rural communities while connecting metropolitan centers, offering convenient single-seat rides across numerous city pairs. For working-class Americans and business travelers alike, these services provide efficient, affordable, and reliable access.

To preserve and strengthen long-distance service, the new fleet should incorporate proven designs, emphasize durability and reliability, and leverage the existing American supply chain wherever possible. Interior design should be guided by simplicity and functionality, keeping the needs of everyday travelers front and center.

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. Continued investment in domestic manufacturing and supply chains is essential to the long-term viability of these rail services.

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

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lisa Carver". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Lisa" being more prominent than the last name "Carver".

Lisa Carver
Executive Director