

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

January 21, 2010

President Barack Obama
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave., NW
Washington, DC

Dear President Obama:

Like you, we believe that passenger rail service is an important part of our nation's transportation future. As America's only national passenger rail, Amtrak is a key part of that future. We write today to urge you to keep Amtrak's national scope in mind when selecting your remaining nominee to the Amtrak Board of Directors by nominating a qualified individual from the West.

Amtrak operates in 46 states and the District of Columbia, yet its Board of Directors lacks the same geographical diversity. Two of its current five members – CEO Joseph Boardman and Mrs. Nancy A. Naples – are from New York. Two others – Secretary of Transportation Ray LaHood and Chairman Thomas Carper – are from Illinois, while Mrs. Donna McLean is based in Washington, D.C. Your nominees currently pending before the Senate – Mr. Anthony Coscia, Mr. Bert DiClemente, and Mr. Jeffrey Moreland – are from New York, Delaware and Texas respectively. While the South is well served by the addition of a member from Texas, western states remain unrepresented.

This lack of geographical diversity is contrary to Amtrak's authorizing language under the Passenger Rail Investment and Improvement Act of 2008, which states that in nominating the board, the President shall "...try to provide adequate and balanced representation of the major geographic regions of the United States served by Amtrak." With no members from the West, the board does not currently provide "adequate and balanced" representation.

Passenger rail is as important to western communities as eastern communities. We urge you to recognize its role to our states by nominating one of the many qualified people available from the West to the remaining Amtrak board position. Thank you for your consideration of our request, and we look forward to working with you in the future to strengthen passenger rail in our region.

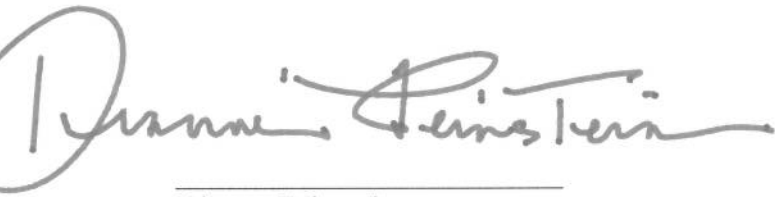
Sincerely,



Ron Wyden
United States Senator



Mike Crapo
United States Senator



Dianne Feinstein
United States Senator



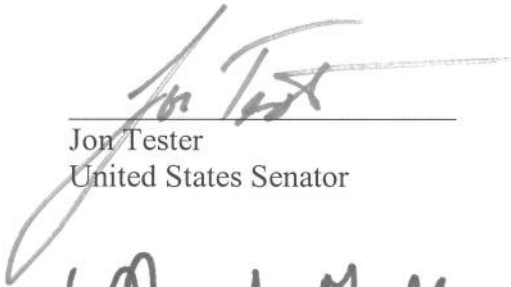
James E. Risch
United States Senator



Maria Cantwell
United States Senator



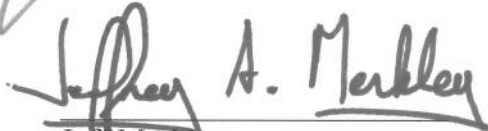
Tom Udall
United States Senator



Jon Tester
United States Senator



Mark Udall
United States Senator



Jeff Merkley
United States Senator



Michael F. Bennet
United States Senator