Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20510

April 5, 2014

The Honorable Patty Murray
Chairman
Subcommittee on Transportation, Housing and Urban Development and Related Agencies
Dirksen 142
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Susan Collins
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Transportation, Housing and Urban Development and Related Agencies
Dirksen 128
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Murray and Ranking Member Collins:

As the Subcommittee prepares to consider the fiscal year 2015 appropriations bill for the Transportation, Housing and Urban Development and Related Agencies Appropriations, we respectfully request your support for the capital investment needs of Amtrak's long distance trains.

Long distance service remains a critical link for small and rural communities. Long-distance trains connect small towns to major cities and support local economic development. Every day, Amtrak service reaches more than 500 communities—and 40 percent of America's rural population—across 46 states. This connectivity is vital to the communities and people they serve and helps ensure that small towns and rural communities do not with wither. However, despite their importance, these trains require significant capital investment that has gone unmet.

The backlog in needed infrastructure upgrades directly impacts our states. As you know, Amtrak has announced a possible reroute of the Southwest Chief due to changing shared-use needs. The Southwest Chief is Amtrak's second longest route, connecting Chicago to Los Angeles and providing service to towns and cities in Illinois, Missouri, Kansas, Colorado, New Mexico, Arizona and California. The potential reroute has raised serious concerns among the affected communities who depend on this service. While all stakeholders are working to find a responsible and reasonable solution that will preserve the current route, how to address the significant capital investment needs necessary to retain the current route remains unclear.

While we recognize you are operating under very tight fiscal constraints, we hope you will consider the needs of our constituents in this year's Transportation, Housing and Urban Development and Related Agencies Appropriations bill. Please do not hesitate to contact our staff, Sabrina De Santiago at (202) 224-6621 with Senator Tom Udall, Dan Alpert with Senator Martin Heinrich at (202) 224 -5521, and Kate Howard with Senator Mark Udall at (202) 224-5941 with any questions.

Sincerely,

Mark Udall
United States Senator

Tom Udall
United States Senator

Martin Heinrich
United States Senator