



January 7, 2003

The Honorable George W. Bush  
President of the United States  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

In a few days, the House Appropriations Committee will decide the funding level for Amtrak for the remainder of fiscal year 2003. We are writing to urge you to support \$1.2 billion for Amtrak, as adopted by the Senate Appropriations Committee. We are concerned that an appropriation below that amount will force Amtrak into the type of financial crisis that the nation only narrowly averted in July.

An appropriation below \$1.2 billion will jeopardize Amtrak's national network and create major uncertainties for all of the commuter and freight rail services across the country that depend daily on Amtrak. The House Committee mark of \$761 million guarantees insolvency by spring and the shutting down of the nation's passenger rail service leading to factors that further damage an already weak national economy.

As you know, a Washington Post poll (August 5, 2002) found that 71 percent of Americans favor continuing federal subsidies to Amtrak and would support additional federal funding so the passenger railroad can increase service.

Mayors from both political parties urge you to support the Senate's funding level in the full-year appropriation bill, and set aside any new policy directives, which should be thoroughly debated and voted upon in the authorizing committees, not imposed through "riders" on the appropriation bill.

We are on the front lines in addressing America's growing transportation crisis. We recognize the essential need for a national passenger rail system with Amtrak as the operator that includes long and short distance trains.

With strong backing from mayors across the nation, we stand ready to work with you on this urgent appropriations issue.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Thomas M. Menino in black ink.

Thomas M. Menino  
Mayor of Boston  
President

Handwritten signature of Kenneth L. Barr in black ink.

Kenneth L. Barr  
Mayor of Fort Worth  
Chair, Transportation &  
Communication Committee

Handwritten signature of J. Thomas Cochran in black ink.

J. Thomas Cochran  
Executive Director