

State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations

SENATOR
MARC A. COTE
Deputy Majority Leader
District 24

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September 27, 2016

Chairman Daniel R. Elliott III
Vice Chairman Deb Miller
Member Ann D. Begeman
Surface Transportation Board
395 E Street S.W.
Washington, DC 20423

RE: GENESEE & WYOMING INC. - ACQUISITION OF CONTROL EXEMPTION -
PROVIDENCE AND WORCESTER RAILROAD COMPANY DOCKET NUMBER 36064

Dear Chairman Elliott, Vice Chairman Miller, and Member Begeman:

My district of North Smithfield and Woonsocket, RI is home to over 50,000 residents as well as major corporate employers (including CVS Health and Fidelity Investments in neighboring Smithfield) but is currently not served by any regional or intercity rail. This deficiency severely hampers the growth of existing businesses as well as the ability of our residents to travel for better work opportunities or simple leisure.

Recently BSRC, a private company, has been working with the Providence and Worcester Railroad restore passenger rail to the Blackstone River Valley, something that has not existed in over half a century, but would bring much needed employment options and business growth opportunities.

This type of private investment in public infrastructure is absolutely needed if our region is to continue recovery from the recent recession and to strengthen economically in the coming years.

The proposed change in control of the Providence and Worcester, a locally managed common carrier, to Genesee and Wyoming, Inc. - a multi-billion dollar national conglomerate with no stake in the local community, is concerning.

Frequently in these types of transactions local or regional projects are quietly left to flounder or outright terminated upon consummation of a management change.

For these reasons, I would respectfully request that the Board grant Genesee and Wyoming's petition with the caveat that it continue to work with BSRC to restore passenger service to the Blackstone River Valley.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Marc A. Cote". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a prominent loop at the beginning.

Marc A. Cote
Deputy Majority Leader
Senator, District 24

Cc: Parties of Record via US Mail