

State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations

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August 17, 2016

Chairman Daniel R. Elliott III
Surface Transportation Board
395 E Street S.W.
Washington, DC 20423

RE: BOSTON SURFACE RAILROAD COMPANY, INC. - PETITION FOR EXEMPTION - FROM 49
U.S.C. SUBTITLE IV - Docket Number FD-36043

Dear Chairman Elliott:

I am writing to express my support for the private passenger rail service proposed by the Boston Surface Railroad Company (BSRC) between Worcester, MA, Woonsocket and Providence, RI.

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.

BSRC, a private company, has invested hundreds of thousands of dollars in planning, engineering and study to 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 opportunity.

BSRC's recent restoration of the downtown Woonsocket Depot as an intermodal hub by itself will provide a much needed nexus for economic development.

Finally connections to Amtrak's intercity rail network in Providence would greatly enhance access to New York City and other major metropolitan points south such as Philadelphia and Washington, D.C.

For these reasons, I would respectfully request that the Board grant BSRC's petition as promptly as possible.

Sincerely,

Marc A. Cote
Senator, District 24