



State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

REPRESENTATIVE STEPHEN M. CASEY *District 50*
Deputy Majority Leader
Committee on Labor
Committee on Veterans' Affairs

September 29, 2016

241619

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

ENTERED
Office of Proceedings
September 29, 2016
Part of
Public Record

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:

As both a Representative of the People of Woonsocket, RI and member of the Rhode Island House Labor and Corporations Committees I am writing to you to urge you to carefully consider your approval of the above petition.

Currently the Providence and Worcester Railroad is the sole carrier capable of providing service for two entities which are extremely important to the economic wellbeing of not just my District but the entire Blackstone River Valley, one of the birthplaces of the American Industrial Revolution: The Blackstone Valley Tourism Council (BVTC) and the Boston Surface Railroad Company (BSR).

The Blackstone Valley Polar Express is operated by the BVTC and serves over 20,000 passengers annually, some of whom travel across the country for the experience. This annual influx of consumers provides tourism revenue for local retailers and eateries. It serves as a showcase for my District of Woonsocket, Greater Providence and Southern Massachusetts for those who would potentially explore other commercial and industrial business opportunities here.

Further, BSR is a private entity, recently given permission by your Board to operate passenger services from Worcester, MA through Woonsocket and into Providence, RI. The restoration of passenger service to my District and the entire Blackstone Valley will bring much needed employment and development opportunities to the area. Specifically to downtown Woonsocket, where BSR has recently moved its headquarters and is in the process of restoring our historic train station's role as an intermodal facility. As a private startup company BSR is Labor friendly, something which cannot be discounted.

Again, neither of the entities have alternatives for their services without the cooperation of the Providence and Worcester Railroad. The BVTC currently collects several hundred thousand dollars annually in revenue and stands to make many multiples of that when BSR begins their operation.

With these items in mind, I would ask that the Board only grant the above petition if Genesee and Wyoming makes the appropriate provisions and continues providing service to the BVTC, and to work with BSR to restore Passenger Rail Service to the Valley.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Stephen M. Casey". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, sweeping flourish at the end.

Representative Stephen M. Casey
Deputy Majority Leader
District 50
Woonsocket, Rhode island 02895
(508) 942-0484

Cc: Parties of Record via Electronic Mail