

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

October 19, 2012

Joseph Szabo, Administrator
Federal Railroad Administration
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Administrator Szabo:

We write to offer our comments on scoping for the Northeast Corridor Tier 1 Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), in particular with regard to the proposed North-South Rail Link (NSRL) in Boston. As you are likely aware, the NSRL would connect Boston's North and South Stations by rail. Both stations are terminal points for Amtrak as well as regional commuter rail operations. At this time, there is no direct connection for rail vehicles between the two stations.

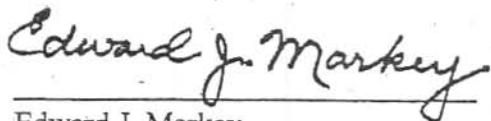
There is certainly a local benefit to connecting North and South Stations. Currently, commuters traveling between North and South Stations must disembark their train and then either take a taxi, make light rail connections or walk from one station to the other. Given Boston's geography, making this journey through congested downtown city streets takes much longer than one would expect. This situation is far from ideal and ought to be addressed.

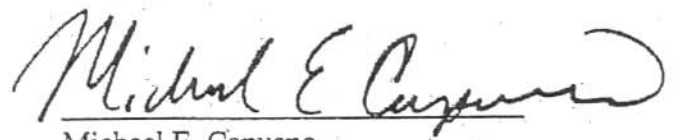
For passenger rail travel to be truly viable in the Northeast Corridor, riders must be able to travel all along the line without being forced to change trains. This sort of single seat ride potential will also spur economic growth along the Northeast Corridor. While Massachusetts would unquestionably benefit from this, it is clear to us that linking North and South Stations would advantage the entire Northeast Corridor.


As Massachusetts continues to invest in rail infrastructure and expanding service throughout the Commonwealth, we feel that now is the time to seriously consider the NSRL as an essential component to the region's transportation plan for the 21st century and beyond. The NSRL will improve efficiency and affordability for local commuters and regional passengers as well. By offering a viable alternative to traveling by car, it will also have a positive impact on the environment.

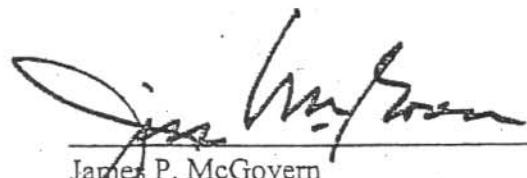
We urge you to include the North-South Rail Link in the Northeast Corridor Tier 1 EIS. Thank you for your consideration of this matter.

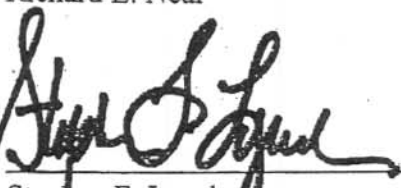
Sincerely,

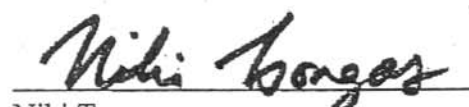

Edward J. Markey

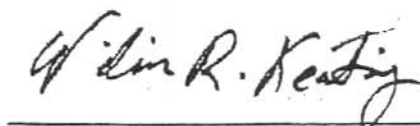

Michael E. Capuano


Richard E. Neal


James P. McGovern


Stephen F. Lynch


Niki Tsongas


William R. Keating