

SETH MOULTON
SIXTH DISTRICT, MASSACHUSETTS



1408 LONGWORTH BUILDING
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20515
202.225.8020

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES
COMMITTEE ON THE BUDGET
COMMITTEE ON SMALL BUSINESS
SUBCOMMITTEE ON HEALTH AND TECHNOLOGY
RANKING MEMBER

21 FRONT STREET
SALEM, MA 01970
978.531.1669

moulton.house.gov
@TeamMoulton

UNITED STATES
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

February 16, 2016

Ms. Rebecca Reyes-Alicia
NEC FUTURE
U.S. DOT Federal Railroad Administration
One Bowling Green, Suite 429
New York, NY 10004

Dear Ms. Reyes-Alicia,

First, I want to applaud the Federal Railroad Administration's efforts to improve and enhance passenger rail service along the Northeast Corridor through NEC FUTURE. For too long, the Northeast Corridor rail system has failed to meet the growing demands of the 21st Century, and held back economic growth as a result. As you continue to evaluate and identify potential solutions for the long-term transportation needs of the region, I ask that you consider the North-South Rail Link (NSRL) as part of your "Alternatives Considered" to unify the Northeast Corridor's disconnected interstate rail system.

Over the past decade, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, in partnership with the FRA and other federal stakeholders, have been pressing ahead with the short-term expansion of Boston's North and South Stations without seriously considering the NSRL's through-service alternative. Already, there is overwhelming evidence that South Station expansion is currently facing rapidly rising costs and provides only temporary capacity relief. This is a decidedly nineteenth-century approach to a serious problem for a twenty-first-century metropolis. Across the globe, leading cities are connecting terminal stations to meet the demands of an increasingly mobile society, and we should be doing the same here in the United States.

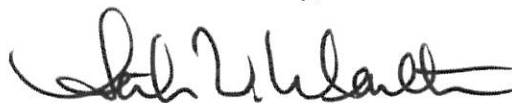
The NSRL would connect Boston's North and South Stations, providing full commuter and subway connectivity in the city, run-through service for intrastate commuter trains, and full connectivity for interstate trains traveling along the Northeast Corridor. The NSRL Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR), which was suspended by MassDOT in 2003 for short-term political and budgetary reasons after eight years of work, emphasizes that a unified regional rail system, fully linked to Boston's downtown transit lines, is a vital investment for the long-term efficiency of our transportation network and creates huge benefits for the regional economy. The ability to take a train from Washington D.C. or New York, through Boston to destinations in New Hampshire and Maine, would make the entire Northeast region more competitive by improving access to skilled workers, jobs, affordable housing, and new opportunities for economic development.

It is deeply concerning that the DEIS for the Northeast Corridor Rail Investment Plan identifies South Station as a Major Hub, without fully addressing the ways in which NEC FUTURES plans to address the growing capacity issues and the costs associated with expanding this stub-end terminal. It is estimated that the South Station and North Station expansion projects would cost upwards of \$3 billion and only serve to exacerbate the efficiency and connectivity issues that have plagued the Commonwealth's transportation system and the Northeast Corridor for decades.

In contrast, the through-service provided by the North-South Rail Link presents long-term benefits of substantially faster commute times, higher revenues from more passengers, significantly greater operating efficiencies, reduced highway congestion, and the conversion of urban rail yards into more productive spaces by pushing switching and storage yards outside of Boston. In fact, the savings are substantial enough to bond a major portion of the project costs. Further, studies of comparable projects underway in dozens of cities across the globe today suggest that the NSRL could be completed for approximately the same cost as expanding both terminals. All this strongly suggests that the addition of more surface tracks at both stub-end terminals does little to address increased congestion and would be a poor investment.

I believe that now is the time to take a bold, visionary, and regional approach to our transportation crisis, one that will secure the Northeast Corridor's place as a world-class transit network for the next century. As NEC FUTURE continues to address the growing economic and population demands on the Northeast Corridor, I strongly urge you to include the North-South Rail Link in the DEIS. A fully unified rail network from Maine to Washington D.C. improves our economic competitiveness, addresses significant capacity needs, and makes for a stronger Northeast Corridor for decades to come.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Seth Moulton", written in a cursive style.

SETH MOULTON
Member of Congress