



November 28, 2022

Amit Bose, Administrator
Federal Railroad Administration
United States Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave SE
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Administrator Bose:

The Island Pond Chamber of Commerce and the Brighton Community Forum would like to express very strong support for the Vermont Agency Of Transportation's Federal Railroad Administration Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvements (CRISI) grant application, "Tri-State Regional Rail Upgrade Project."

The St. Lawrence & Atlantic Railroad (SLR) is partnering with the states of Vermont, Maine, and New Hampshire on this grant project. The Vermont Agency of Transportation (VTRANS) is the lead applicant for the application. Matching funds are being provided by the States of Maine and New Hampshire, as well as the SLR to make the project an innovative public-private partnership. After years of investment in this corridor by the States of Vermont, New Hampshire, Maine and the SLR, this is the final work needed to complete the three-state modern heavy haul rail freight corridor and achieve 286,000 lb. railcar weight capacity for current and future Vermont businesses. Railcar shipments are currently restricted to 263,000 lbs. which results in inefficient shipment of partially loaded freight cars. This puts our Vermont businesses at a competitive disadvantage.

The SLR mainline will receive new, heavier welded rail, ties, ballast, and grade crossing rehabilitation. This project will continue efforts by the SLR and the three states over many years to upgrade the SLR main line into a state of good repair, enhance safety, and allow fully loaded modern rail car shipments,

This corner of our state is very rural and economic development is challenging. Having access to the national rail network is very important for supply chain efficiency. Currently RCP Transit in Island Pond is a major customer of the SLR and depends on rail shipments of lumber from long distances to support their business.

I hope that you will give this CRISI grant application serious consideration for selection and award.

Sincerely yours,

Michael Strait
Treasurer/Director