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September 14, 2021

The Honorable Michael Doyle  
306 Cannon Office Building  
Washington DC, 20515

Dear Representative Doyle,

On behalf of the more than 9,000 members of the Pennsylvania Chamber of Business and Industry, the largest, broad-based business advocacy organization in the Commonwealth, I am writing to you to express support for expanding passenger rail service throughout our commonwealth and the mid-Atlantic region. As we look to recover from the pandemic, it is vital we develop a modern, safe and efficient system of transportation infrastructure to enhance the mobility of our state's workforce. Such a system can be an asset to regional economic development, the attraction and expansion of new investment into the state, and meeting the needs of businesses and their workforce to be flexible in terms of transportation options.

We support the bipartisan infrastructure framework, as well as proposals to expand Amtrak's service to connect growing urban areas like Scranton, Allentown and Reading with larger, metropolitan areas in the region such as New York City and Philadelphia. We believe this expansion will allow these communities to continue to compete and expand their economic base. New and upgraded service to Erie is also proposed, which will provide new opportunities for the northwestern corner of our state, as will enhanced service between Pittsburgh, Harrisburg and Philadelphia.

We must also voice support for Congress to continue to institute permit reforms and cost-controls in the build-out of these and other vital infrastructure projects. These can include leveraging the private sector to a greater extent for service delivery and providing streamlined reviews under the National Environmental Policy Act, which has bogged down some transportation projects for the better part of a decade. The pending bipartisan infrastructure legislation contains reforms along these lines, and we encourage members on both sides of the aisle to build on these reforms as the federal government funds a modern and efficient infrastructure system.

Providing Pennsylvanians greater transit mobility means enhanced quality of opportunity for all, along with the improved competitiveness of our businesses and attract new business to locate in our state. We respectfully ask that you join us in supporting the expansion of passenger rail service in Pennsylvania to further Pennsylvania's future economy and improve the quality of life for its citizens.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gene Barr".

Gene Barr  
President and CEO