

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

March 9, 2020

The Honorable Elaine L. Chao, Secretary  
United States Department of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE  
Washington, DC 20590

**RE: Infrastructure for Rebuilding America (INFRA) Grant for the Long Bridge Project**

Dear Secretary Chao,

This letter is to express our support for the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation's (DRPT) application for an Infrastructure for Rebuilding America (INFRA) grant for the Long Bridge Project.

Long Bridge, the most heavily traveled railroad bridge connecting Washington, D.C. to Virginia and other southern states, is one of the most significant chokepoints for the East Coast's rail transportation system. The bridge connects the northeast and southeast freight rail networks and extends the spine of the nation's intercity passenger rail system from the Northeast Corridor to the Southeast. The existing bridge, which is at 98 percent capacity during peak hours, is used by CSX freight trains, Amtrak long distance and state-supported trains, and Virginia Railway Express (VRE) commuter trains. The Long Bridge Project would double the capacity of the Potomac River rail crossing by adding a second two-track bridge adjacent to the existing bridge.

This project, which supports projected increases in freight and passenger rail traffic along this corridor, is crucial to continued economic growth and enhanced mobility in Virginia. It will also increase the capacity of the rail network for the Port of Virginia, where 37 percent of goods move in and out by rail. The Port of Virginia will need to increase this share to 45 percent by 2040 to handle a threefold increase in shipments. Building a new Long Bridge, which will double rail capacity at the major rail bottleneck on CSX's main route from the Port of Virginia to the Midwest and the northeast, is imperative to the Port's and Virginia's economic growth strategies. As such, it is a leading infrastructure priority for the Commonwealth.

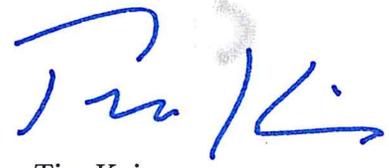
The Commonwealth of Virginia is committed to expanding service and increasing the reliability of its rail lines, as evidenced by the recent landmark rail agreement between the Commonwealth and CSX. The agreement includes Virginia's acquisition of more than 350 miles of railroad right-of-way and 225 miles of track, construction of 37 miles of new track improvements, and increased passenger and commuter rail service. The agreement also provides a pathway to the separation of passenger and freight operations along the corridor, which will improve safety, service, and reliability and support regional growth. The Long Bridge Project is an important part of this agreement and is vital to transforming rail operations in the region.

Please accept this letter of recommendation for this vital project, which aligns with and helps maximize Virginia's ongoing investments in freight and passenger rail operations. Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,



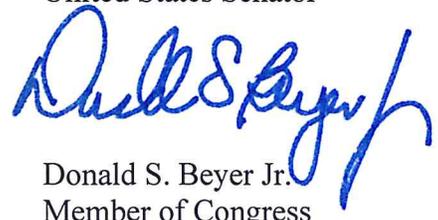
Mark R. Warner  
United States Senator



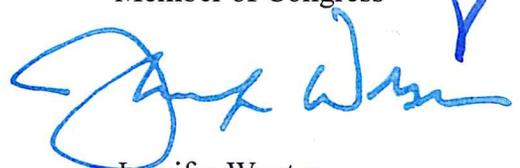
Tim Kaine  
United States Senator



Gerald E. Connolly  
Member of Congress



Donald S. Beyer Jr.  
Member of Congress



Jennifer Wexton  
Member of Congress



Robert C. "Bobby" Scott  
Member of Congress



Robert J. Wittman  
Member of Congress



H. Morgan Griffith  
Member of Congress



Ben Cline  
Member of Congress



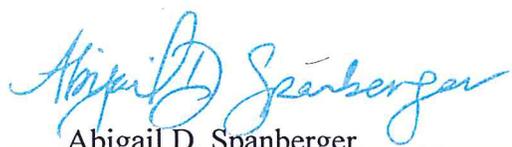
Denver L. Riggleman III  
Member of Congress



Elaine G. Luria  
Member of Congress



A. Donald McEachin  
Member of Congress



Abigail D. Spanberger  
Member of Congress