

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

April 28, 2023

The Honorable Pete Buttigieg  
Secretary of Transportation  
U.S. Department of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE  
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

We write regarding the North Carolina Department of Transportation's (NCDOT) application for funding through the Federal Railroad Administration's Federal-State Partnership for Intercity Passenger Rail Program, for the Raleigh to Richmond Innovating Rail Program – Phases IA & II. The program is being advanced as a partnership between NCDOT and the Virginia Passenger Rail Authority (VPRA).

The intent of the Raleigh to Richmond Innovating Rail Program is to advance the development of the federally designated Southeast Corridor by providing engineering design for infrastructure improvements and construction of the S-Line, a critical missing link in the Southeast network. This Program will also support network resiliency for freight as well as expanded high-performance intercity rail service from Raleigh, North Carolina to Richmond, Virginia and beyond. Phases IA and II will focus on continuing engineering design, safety improvements, track upgrades, and service development with construction of 11 grade separations on the active portion of the S-Line corridor in Wake County, North Carolina.

Overall, the Program has both local and multi-regional benefits as it serves eight counties (Warren, Vance, Franklin, Wake, Mecklenburg, Brunswick, Dinwiddie, and Chesterfield) across North Carolina and Virginia. Phases IA and II of the Program will build upon previous federal and state investments in environmental research and documentation of the Southeast Corridor, as well as North Carolina and Virginia's respective acquisitions of the S-Line. This subsequent step of incremental engineering and construction prepares the regions for future improvements and services along the rail line that will provide economic development, job growth, and enhanced mobility opportunities to underserved and growing communities. The program will also support continued planning efforts of future interstate rail infrastructure and service development partnerships that have been established through the Virginia-North Carolina Interstate High Speed Rail Compact and the Southeast Corridor Commission.

For these reasons, we urge your full and fair consideration of NCDOT and VPRA's application within all relevant rules and regulations. Please do not hesitate to contact our offices for additional information about the project.

Very truly yours,



Deborah K. Ross  
Member of Congress



Thom Tillis  
U.S. Senator



Valerie Foushee  
Member of Congress



Wiley Nickel  
Member of Congress



Alma S. Adams, Ph.D.  
Member of Congress