Michigan Association of Railroad Passengers, Inc.
33373 Hampshire Road · Livonia, MI 48154-2952 · www.marp.org

28 November 2022

Douglas Gascon
Office of Policy & Planning, Federal Railroad Administration
1200 New Jersey Ave., SE, Room W38-212
Washington, D.C., 20590

Dear Mr. Gascon:

The Michigan Association of Railroad Passengers strongly supports the **joint Midwest Interstate Passenger Rail Commission-Amtrak application for a $5 million Consolidated Rail Infrastructure & Safety Improvements (CRISI) grant to fund the "Invest Midwest**" advanced planning project to take passenger rail corridors identified in the Federal Railroad Administration's 2021 Midwest Regional Rail Plan (MWRRP) to the next level of planning and development.

The State of Michigan, with state and federal funding, has made a substantial investment in its three state-supported passenger routes: the *Blue Water* from Port Huron to Chicago with one daily round trip; the *Pere Marquette* from Grand Rapids to Chicago with one daily round trip; and the *Wolverine* from Pontiac/Detroit to Chicago with three daily round trips. Future improvement and expansion of our state network as envisioned in the Michigan State Rail Plan, the "Amtrak Connects US" plan, and the FRA-led Midwest Regional Rail Plan is heavily dependent on further development of rail in the larger region.

With this grant funding, the Midwest state DOTs and their partners will be able to take the critical first steps toward realization of the "Invest Midwest" initiative to create a Midwest network that provides safe, reliable and more frequent service, new connections to rural and urban markets and reduced travel times between communities. Not inconsequential is the role a modern and properly functioning passenger rail system will have in addressing climate challenges.

MIPRC, as a compact among the Midwest states, has a two-decades-long history of collaboration and cooperation that goes beyond mere provision of intercity passenger rail services. We look forward to a continuation of a shared, multi-year action plan that will guide and inform the Midwest's passenger rail development and build an economically vibrant and equitable regional network with the potential to advance connections with surrounding regions.

The Michigan Association of Railroad Passengers strongly supports this application and looks forward to the planning project's results.

Sincerely,

John Guidinger

John Guidinger
Chair, Michigan Association of Railroad Passengers

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