

NATIONAL RAILROAD PASSENGER CORPORATION

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Dennis Newman  
Executive Vice President, Planning & Strategy

300462

February 28, 2020

Office of the Secretary  
Surface Transportation Board  
395 E Street, S.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20423

ENTERED  
Office of Proceedings  
March 5, 2020  
Part of  
Public Record

Re: Docket #: FD 36368  
Soo Line Corp. – Acquisition and Control – Central Maine & Quebec Railway US Inc.

Dear Board Members:

The National Railroad Passenger Corporation ("Amtrak") submits this letter in support of the application filed December 17, 2019 by Soo Line Corporation (Soo Line) to acquire control of Central Maine & Quebec Railway US Inc. (CMQR). While we recognize that the deadline for filing comments has passed, we ask that this letter be included in the record.

Amtrak and Soo Line have had a strong and productive working relationship for many years, and Amtrak's *Hiawatha* service on the Soo Line is consistently among Amtrak's best performing routes. Recently, Amtrak recognized Soo Line parent, Canadian Pacific, as Amtrak's top performing host railroad four years running.

While Amtrak does not currently operate over any of the rail lines of which Soo Line is acquiring, Amtrak has been working for several years with CMQR, the Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority (NNEPRA) and the State of Maine Department of Transportation (MeDOT) to introduce an extension of the *Downeaster* intercity rail passenger service currently operating between Boston, Massachusetts and Brunswick, Maine. The extended *Downeaster* service would operate seasonally over the MeDOT-owned Rockland Branch between Brunswick and Rockland, Maine (Rockland Branch). CMQR currently leases the Rockland Branch from MeDOT.

The parties have been working towards the restoration of intercity passenger rail service over the Rockland Branch starting in the Summer of 2020. To help facilitate the continued planning for this service, Amtrak respectfully requests the Board's expedited review of this minor transaction.

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Should the Board approve the transaction, Amtrak looks forward to working with Soo Line to advance this seasonal service.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "D. Newman", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Dennis Newman

*Executive Vice-President, Strategy and Planning*

cc:    Joe McHugh -            Amtrak  
       Caroline Mael -        Amtrak  
       Jim Blair -            Amtrak  
       Nina Irish -           Amtrak

## **CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE**

Pursuant to the Board's Decision No. 1, the undersigned certifies that a copy of the foregoing letter was served by First Class Mail this 5<sup>th</sup> of March 2020 on the following:

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

The Honorable William P. Barr  
Attorney General of the United States  
c/o Assistant Attorney General  
Antitrust Division, Room 3109  
Department of Justice  
950 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20530

The undersigned further certifies that a copy of the letter was served by electronic mail this 5<sup>th</sup> of March 2020 on the following:

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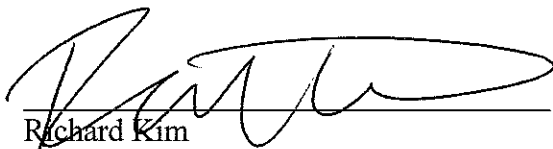
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Mark Mosher

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A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Richard Kim', written over a horizontal line.

Richard Kim

Sr. Paralegal

National Railroad Passenger Corporation (Amtrak)