



EP 774 (Sub-No. 1)
307855

January 30, 2024

Mr. Martin J. Oberman
Chairman
Surface Transportation Board
395 E Street SW
Washington, DC 20423

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Office of Proceedings
January 30, 2024
Part of
Public Record

RE: Nomination for the Passenger Rail Advisory Committee

Dear Mr. Oberman:

I write to nominate Mr. Justin R. Vonashek, Executive Vice President & Chief Operating Officer of Metro-North Railroad, for the Passenger Rail Advisory Committee (PRAC) as a representative of a commuter rail operator whose facilities are utilized by Amtrak.

Metro-North Railroad provides regional and commuter rail transportation in Manhattan and the Bronx as well as communities north and east of the New York Metropolitan area in New York State and Connecticut. On our New Haven Line, Metro-North hosts Amtrak's Northeast Corridor services between New York City and Boston/Springfield MA, and Vermonter service to St. Albans VT. While on our Hudson Line, Metro-North hosts Amtrak's Services to Albany NY, Burlington VT, Chicago IL, Montreal QC, Niagara Falls NY, and Toronto ON. Metro-North is also currently working with Amtrak to develop Metro-North service to Amtrak's New York Penn Station, which will result in Metro-North operating on Amtrak territory, in addition to our current host role. Beyond Amtrak, Metro-North has an important relationship with another major commuter railroad agency, New Jersey Transit, which operates and dispatches trains on our services west of the Hudson River.

Mr. Vonashek has over 18 years of experience in the regional and commuter railroad industry. He has been with Metro-North for 8 years. In his first five years at Metro-North he served as our Vice President of System Safety, which included leading Metro-North's response to the COVID-19 pandemic. In 2020 he became our Senior Vice President of Operations, leading our Transportation and Maintenance of Equipment Departments. In 2023 he was given the responsibility of leading our third and final operating department, Maintenance of Way, and was promoted to his current role of Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer. In his many duties, he is involved in all matters pertaining to Amtrak.

Mr. Vonashek has served in operations, regulatory compliance, and safety capacities at two other major metropolitan regional and commuter rail agencies – where host and tenant relationships existed with Amtrak. This provides him a diverse range of first-hand experience both in regions and populations served as well as in agencies with relationships with Amtrak. At Keolis Commuter Services in Boston MA (contract operator of MBTA's Commuter Rail) in 2014 and 2015 he was their Chief Safety, Security, Emergency Preparedness, and Regulatory Compliance Officer – a time which included Boston's single year of record setting snow fall of 110.6 inches. He started his career at Metra in Chicago IL, having worked his way up from Transportation Specialist, Corporate Trainmaster, and Manager of Schedules and Services to Director of Regulatory Compliance. In addition to his leadership roles in regional and commuter rail transportation, he currently serves as Chair of the Chief Operating Officers Committee at the American Public Transportation Association, has been on the board of State Operation Life Saver Organizations since 2014, has represented his three railroad employers in FRA Railroad Safety Advisory

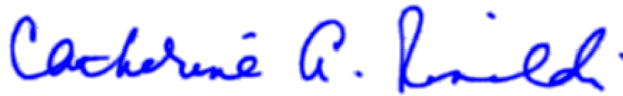
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Committee proceedings since 2008, and holds a Master of Science in Transportation Management from the University of Denver.

Mr. Vonashek is willing to serve as a member of the PRAC and agrees to serve in a representative capacity. His contact information is as follows:

Justin R. Vonashek
Title: Executive Vice President & Chief Operating Officer
Phone: 212-499-4300
Email: vonashek@mnr.org

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Catherine A. Rinaldi". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Catherine" being the most prominent part.

Catherine A. Rinaldi