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Surface Transportation Board
Attn: Docket No. EP 774 (Sub-No. 1)
395 E Street, S.W.
Washington, DC 20423

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To whom it may concern:

On behalf of the Board of Directors of Virginians for High Speed Rail (VHSR), we do hereby nominate Rafael S. Guroian, of Midlothian, Virginia, to the Surface Transportation Board's consideration for the STB Passenger Rail Advisory Committee. VHSR held its vote on Friday, January 12, 2024 and Mr. Guroian was nominated with unanimous consent, and Mr. Guroian humbly accepted the responsibility. Mr. Guroian qualifies as a candidate for nomination in both the *state-funded intercity passenger rail* and *rail passenger advocacy organization* categories; should Mr. Guroian be chosen, this board would be pleased with either category selection by the STB.

Mr. Guroian has 19 years of impressive and wholly unique experience in passenger rail advocacy, in state-oriented passenger rail logistics, and in passenger rail industry experience. His breadth of knowledge and experience uniquely qualifies him to advise on matters relating to efficiency, disputes, infrastructure, and service planning, as outlined below:

1. As an 11 year member and 4 year chair of the MARC Riders Advisory Council (MRAC), Mr. Guroian most notably represented the MARC ridership as the Maryland MTA and service operator Amtrak formulated a response and corrective actions to the catastrophic and historical June 21, 2010 "Hell Train" breakdown that stranded 900 Penn Line passengers in a dangerously hot train without air conditioning for hours before rescue. The result of this collaboration between MRAC, MdMTA, and Amtrak was an entirely overhauled MARC Penn Line schedule that accounted for equipment limitations, passenger loads, and timetable adjustments, marking the single largest change to the Penn Line's schedule since before Penn Central took the line over from the Pennsylvania Railroad decades earlier.
2. While serving as MRAC Chair, Mr. Guroian also oversaw the Council's contributions and enhancements to the MdMTA's 35 year vision plan (including expanded service to Newark, DE and Alexandria, VA), and the realization of first-ever weekend service on the Penn Line and mid-day service on the Camden Line.
3. Mr. Guroian also oversaw friendly and respectful negotiations between MRAC, MdMTA, Amtrak, and CSX related to heat advisory restrictions, weather restrictions, track work schedules, and timetable adjustments that resulted in Amtrak and CSX changing or modifying their operational plans to help better accommodate passengers.
4. Mr. Guroian has deep experience in mobile computing and app design for passenger railroads. He worked for Amtrak from 2009-2010 where he created and then oversaw the world's first rail Conductor handheld electronic ticketing system, pioneered with iPhones. Mr. Guroian subsequently provided the design and inspiration for Amtrak's passenger

mobile apps. Passenger rail operators across the world subsequently began building similar apps based on Mr. Guroian's pioneering first steps.

5. As a VHSR Director and co-chair of our Communications and Outreach Committee, Mr. Guroian is taking an integral position in partnership with Virginia's Passenger Rail Authority and the Commonwealth's Department for Rail and Public Transportation to shape the future of passenger rail within and outside of the Commonwealth. As Virginia embarks on the build-out of the new Potomac River Long Bridge, the reality of increased service along the east coast of the United States is drawing closer; VHSR and Mr. Guroian are at the epicenter of this planning with VPRA and DRPT, which necessarily involves the collaborative cooperation and work with Norfolk Southern, CSX, and Amtrak. The results of this work includes the long-anticipated "S-Line" High Speed corridor between DC, Richmond, Raleigh, Charlotte, and Atlanta, intra-state service on the Commonwealth Corridor across Virginia, and enhanced Northeast Corridor routing and capacity expansion options throughout Virginia.

It is with great pleasure that VHSR nominates Mr. Guroian for this important position on the STB's Passenger Rail Advisory Committee. He is an individual who knows how to work with both rail carriers and freight hosts, who knows how to realize efficiencies in service and routing, who understands the realities, limitations, and possibilities inherent to passenger rail in the US, and who has vision for a 21st century America that travels by train.

Sincerely,



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