



Maura Healey, Governor
Kimberley Driscoll, Lieutenant Governor
Monica Tibbitts-Nutt, Secretary & CEO
Meredith Slesinger, MassDOT Rail & Transit Administrator



February 5, 2024

307924

Surface Transportation Board
Attn: Docket No. 774 (Sub-No.1)
395 E Street, S.W.
Washington, DC 20423-0001

ENTERED
Office of Proceedings
February 5, 2024
Part of
Public Record

Re: Docket No. EP 774 (Sub-No.1)

In response to the Surface Transportation Board's notice of vacancies on the newly formed Passenger Railroad Advisory Committee (PRAC) I am writing to express my interest and willingness to serve on the committee, nominating myself as a candidate. As the Rail & Transit Administrator for the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) I would fill the vacancy for a PRAC representative from a state that provides funding for intercity passenger rail.

I have spent my career working on the complex and often contentious issues related to operation and development of passenger rail in the United States. I look forward to the opportunity to contribute my insights and perspectives to support and advise the Board on matters related to passenger rail services. With my career experience spanning from positions with the American Public Transportation Association (APTA), the Northeast Corridor Commission (NECC), Amtrak, and now the Massachusetts Department of Transportation, I have a unique experience and perspectives to resolve conflicting organizational objectives while working toward the collective goal of an efficiently operated and maintained passenger rail network.

As Rail & Transit Administrator at MassDOT I have worked on issues related to improving passenger rail routes, specifically Massachusetts' three Amtrak state-supported services, but also the Long-distance and Northeast Corridor routes that operate within the state. I have worked closely with freight rail hosts to resolve issues related to passenger service use of freight rail carrier-owned facilities and am continuously working to improve processes and coordination for the benefit of the public and Massachusetts communities.

Prior to my position at MassDOT, I served as a Senior Director of Strategic Planning at Amtrak, the Director of Policy and Outreach at the NECC and a Legislative Representative at APTA. Each of these positions included advancing rail transportation policy by engaging disparate stakeholders to come together to achieve common goals. This experience includes authoring the NEC Commuter and Intercity Rail Cost Allocation Policy and development of Amtrak's annual business plans, both required in statute. Given the range of my experience I will provide important perspective to the committee supporting the advice and recommendations it provides to the Board.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Meredith Slesinger

Meredith Slesinger

Meredith Slesinger
Rail & Transit Administrator
Massachusetts Department of Transportation
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Attachment

Meredith Slesinger

meredith.slesinger@dot.state.ma.us

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Massachusetts Department of Transportation | Boston, MA

Rail & Transit Administrator | 2021-present

Deputy Rail & Transit Administrator | 2020-2021

- Lead MassDOT's Rail & Transit Division responsible for the Commonwealth's passenger and freight rail programs and provide oversight and policy direction to the Commonwealth's 15 Regional Transit Authorities. Responsible for ~\$75 million state-funded rail capital program to maintain 283 miles of MassDOT right-of-way.
- Fund and oversee MassDOT state-supported routes: Amtrak Hartford Line, Vermonter, and Valley Flyer.
- Launched Amtrak Berkshire Flyer summer pilot service in partnership with host railroad CSX, Amtrak, and NYSDOT.
- Coordinated with host railroad CSX to achieve agreement on capacity analysis/needs to support future passenger rail services
- Awarded three FRA grants to support growth of passenger and freight rail service, including \$108 million CRISI award for the Inland Route. Successfully negotiated local match contribution from Amtrak and support from CSX.
- Serve as MassDOT's representative on the State-Amtrak Intercity Passenger Rail Committee and the Northeast Corridor Commission. Co-chair the Commission's Cost Allocation Committee.

Amtrak | Washington DC

Senior Director, Strategic Planning | 2017-present

Strategy Director | 2016-2017

- *Business Plans and Reporting.* Lead development of Amtrak's required annual business plans. Work with executive team and Board of Directors to ensure plans align with corporate goals and statutory requirements and develop performance tracking system. Supervise staff, manage interface with Federal Railroad Administration (FRA); brief Congressional staff, state partners, and other stakeholders on plan contents.
- *Capital Planning.* Manage team of transportation planners responsible for implementing statutory capital planning and reporting requirements for Northeast Corridor infrastructure and stations.
- *Policy Development.* Direct Amtrak's strategy and engagement with the Northeast Corridor Commission.
- *Special Projects.* Developed new procedures and standards for all content presented to the Board of Directors; draft public document for Amtrak's long range plan for the National Network.
- *Culture Initiatives.* Selected for participation in internal working groups to lead cultural and organizational change.

Northeast Corridor Commission | Washington, DC

Director, Policy & Outreach | 2011-2016

- *Policy and Strategy.* Authored first-ever *NEC Commuter and Intercity Rail Cost Allocation Policy* to implement statutory requirements for cost allocation and infrastructure planning on the NEC which resulted in equitably sharing over \$1 billion in annual costs among the NEC's nine passenger railroads. Prior to this policy there was no consistent method for Amtrak and other passenger railroads to split costs among themselves. Staffed Commission committee chairs on all facets of policy development and negotiation strategy. Helped eliminate roadblocks and built consensus for the Commission to adopt the policy.
- *Legislative.* Directed all legislative and federal affairs activities for congressional advisory commission composed of Northeast States, the U.S. Department of Transportation, Amtrak, commuter authorities, and freight railroads. Briefed congressional Members and staff on Commission activities and drafted legislative text to advance key priorities that was ultimately included in the FAST Act.
- *Management.* Managed Commission's organizational start-up activities, including hiring, procurement, office

leasing, and FRA grant management.

American Public Transportation Association | Washington, DC

Legislative Representative | 2011

Legislative Analyst | 2009-2011

- *Legislative.* Represented the public transportation industry before Congress, federal agencies, and coalition partners.
- *Writing.* Wrote legislative updates and alerts, advocacy communications, position letters, Congressional testimony, and other materials to support APTA's legislative and regulatory agenda.

Basile Baumann Prost Cole and Associates, Annapolis, MD | Associate | 2008-2009

- *Analysis.* Developed market feasibility studies, conducted financial analyses, and authored consulting project reports for public-sector clients regarding transportation policy and projects.
- *Writing.* Drafted proposals and statements of work in response to RFQs and RFPs.

Gotham Organization, Inc., New York, NY | Associate, Development | 2007-2008

Managed closing process for 180-unit mixed-income residential condominium in Harlem. Key member of team dedicated to securing project financing for \$225 million mixed-use development on the Upper West Side.

Marcus Asset Group/Triangle Ventures LLC, Washington, DC | Project Assistant | 2005-2006

Assisted principals in developing a 117-unit rental building jointly developed with the Washington Metropolitan Transit Authority and two 40-unit mixed-income condominiums in Washington, DC.

OTHER PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

National Cooperative Rail Research Program, Transportation Research Board, Washington, DC 2013-2016

Served as expert advisor on study entitled *Developing Multi-State Institutions to Develop Intercity Passenger Rail Programs*.

Georgetown University, School of Continuing and Professional Studies, Washington, DC

Assistant Instructor | 2009-2010

Assistant taught graduate level course: *Financial Modeling Software for Real Estate Analysis*.

United States Senate | Washington, DC

Committee on Environment and Public Works | Intern | 2005

Committee on Governmental Affairs | Press Intern | 2001

TRAINING

Women in Transportation Seminar | Signature Executive Leadership Program | 2019

Amtrak | Business Acumen | 2019

Harvard Kennedy School of Government | Leadership and Decision Making | 2017

Eno Center for Transportation | Transit Mid-Manager Seminar | 2013

Federal Mediation and Conciliation Services | Meeting Facilitation Training | 2013

National Transit Institute | Transit Academy | 2011

EDUCATION

New York University, New York, NY

Bachelor of Arts | Comparative Literature | 2004