

AMY KLOBUCHAR, MINNESOTA
BRIAN SCHATZ, HAWAII
EDWARD MARKEY, MASSACHUSETTS
GARY PETERS, MICHIGAN
TAMMY BALDWIN, WISCONSIN
TAMMY DUCKWORTH, ILLINOIS
JON TESTER, MONTANA
KYRSTEN SINEMA, ARIZONA
JACKY ROSEN, NEVADA
BEN RAY LUJAN, NEW MEXICO
JOHN HICKENLOOPER, COLORADO
RAPHAEL WARNOCK, GEORGIA
PETER WELCH, VERMONT

TED CRUZ, TEXAS
JOHN THUNE, SOUTH DAKOTA
ROGER WICKER, MISSISSIPPI
DEB FISCHER, NEBRASKA
JERRY MORAN, KANSAS
DAN SULLIVAN, ALASKA
MARSHA BLACKBURN, TENNESSEE
TODD YOUNG, INDIANA
TED BUDD, NORTH CAROLINA
ERIC SCHMITT, MISSOURI
J.D. VANCE, OHIO
SHELLEY MOORE CAPITO, WEST VIRGINIA
CYNTHIA LUMMIS, WYOMING

United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE,
AND TRANSPORTATION

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6125

WEBSITE: <https://commerce.senate.gov>

LILA HELMS, MAJORITY STAFF DIRECTOR
BRAD GRANTZ, REPUBLICAN STAFF DIRECTOR

February 7, 2024

307953

The Honorable Martin J. Oberman
Chairman
Surface Transportation Board
395 E Street SW
Washington, D.C. 20423

ENTERED
Office of Proceedings
February 7, 2024
Part of
Public Record

Re: Establishment of Passenger Rail Advisory Committee, Docket No. EP 774-1

Dear Mr. Chairman:

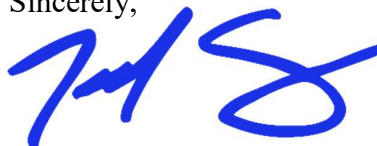
I write in support of the application of Husein Cumber to serve on the Surface Transportation Board's new Passenger Rail Advisory Committee (PRAC). As Chief Strategy Officer of Florida East Coast Industries, Mr. Cumber has played an important role in the development of the private Brightline Florida and public-private Brightline West intercity passenger rail systems.

To introduce privately operated rail service in Florida, Nevada, and California, the Brightline systems have navigated and continue to navigate an array of governmental approvals and support programs, from permitting to private-activity bond allocations to grant awards. Mr. Cumber has been the lead on this process and understands the challenges facing and opportunities for passenger rail growth. The Brightline systems have the potential to be models for future passenger rail that requires only limited public taxpayer subsidies while attracting private investment. To date, Brightline Florida has invested \$6 billion of private capital, and Brightline West anticipates approximately \$9 billion of private capital.

Mr. Cumber would bring an important perspective to the PRAC. Previously, he served as an executive at Florida East Coast Railway, maintaining its freight rail service while negotiating the introduction of commuter rail service. In addition to his public sector rail experience, Mr. Cumber served at the U.S. Department of Transportation as Deputy Chief of Staff under Secretaries Norman Mineta and Mary Peters. He is well positioned to advise on passenger rail.

I believe PRAC would benefit from Mr. Cumber's knowledge and expertise, and I ask for your full and fair consideration of his application.

Sincerely,



Ted Cruz
Ranking Member