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Mr. Henry Posner, III
Co-Chair
Passenger Rail Advisory Committee
c/o Surface Transportation Board
395 E Street SW
Washington, DC 20423

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

Dear Mr. Posner:

This letter is to nominate myself for the Passenger Rail Advisory Committee vacancy. As a resident of the Commonwealth of Virginia, a state which provides funding for passenger rail, I am eligible to serve on the Committee and I believe you will find my qualifications in line with what is needed to accomplish the goals set forth by the Surface Transportation Board in its action to establish this Committee.

(1) the name, position, and business contact information (including email address and phone number) of the candidate;

Phillip Lathan Bell
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(2) a summary of the candidate's experience and qualifications for the position;

I have been associated with the railroad industry in some form since my childhood. As with many who work in the industry, I began as a young rail enthusiast, learning the basics of how trains and railroads work before graduating to understand locomotive types and company histories.

Yet it was one day at the Amtrak Jacksonville, FL Clifford Lane station facility when I asked why the passenger trains were operated by Amtrak, but rail carriers such as CSX and Union Pacific operated freight service. That was my introduction to free market economics, regulation, and the nuances of lawmaking. Ultimately the interplay between business and government led me to more than a passing interest in politics, which was first recognized with a Bachelor's Degree in Political Science from Boston University and employment in a variety of politically-related roles. This includes serving as the National Volunteer Coordinator for the 2012 presidential campaign of former U.S. House Speaker Newt Gingrich, Director of Membership Services for the Maryland Republican Party, and leading grassroots efforts in northwestern New Jersey for the Republican National Committee in 2013.

My broader work experience also had non-partisan roles, including work in the Tax Services Department of State Street Bank, and advocacy for religious liberty legislation for the Ethics & Public Policy Center and spinoff entity 1st Amendment Partnership. In recent years, I served as the Director of External Relations for FreedomWorks, the Nation's largest Center-Right grassroots organization, where I raised millions of dollars in support of their efforts to educate the public on the free market values I learned from the story of passenger and freight rail. Following FreedomWorks' 2024 closure, I established the [Tower K Group](#) which conducts the same fundraising activities, on behalf of a variety of clients who are located across the country.

Each of these non-railroad assignments provided significant color to my work in the railroad industry. Between 2008 and 2011, I served as a State Director for GoRail, a grass-tops entity funded by a variety of private donors—ranging from Class I rail carriers to rail industry suppliers—where I built grass-top (i.e. state- and locally-elected officials, leaders of transit agencies, transit advocates, business groups, environmental groups, and unions) support for the preservation of the Staggers Rail Act of 1980 and its various provisions. My territory covered the Commonwealth of Virginia as well as the states of Maryland, Delaware, New Jersey, Missouri, and Minnesota. This work saw me collaborate with members of both political parties and address issues that went far beyond my bailiwick of freight rail. Thus, I gained practical experience with the difficulties of developing and growing local, regional, and intercity passenger rail, while forging key relationships that I continue to maintain today.

My work at GoRail supported some of my activities at FreedomWorks, when I led the organization's opposition to legislation that would have inhibited the ability of freight rail carriers to conduct their operations and provide the critical infrastructure that supports the operation of Amtrak and commuter rail services.

As part of my work with the Tower K Group, I serve as the Deputy Director of [the Center for Transportation Advancement](#), a program of the Parkview Institute. The Center for Transportation Advancement (C4TA) is developing transportation-focused public policy that is built around free market principles, with the goal of further reducing the legislative- and regulatory burdens foisted upon transportation and logistics providers. C4TA also advocates for the development of new policies which promote permissionless innovation with the goal of spurring a robust, flexible, and forward-looking transportation sector that is owned, operated, and driven by the private sector.

I host [The All Aboard Podcast by All Things Trains](#), which explores railroad history, economics, regulation, and operations, making this information more accessible to the public with the goal of promoting the free market-driven expansion of freight, passenger, and commuter rail. The All Aboard Podcast is part of All Aboard Media, a developmental-stage media enterprise that is focused the transportation industry and hobbies, built around a core of railroading in the U.S. and abroad.

Finally, I have incorporated several companies that have pursued the acquisition of individual railroad lines, as well as existing shortline- and regional railroad carriers. While no such acquisition has been completed as of this writing, these efforts remain ongoing.

(3) a representation that the candidate is willing to serve as a member of the PRAC

I am willing to serve as a member of the Passenger Rail Advisory Committee.

(4) a statement that the candidate agrees to serve in a representative capacity.

I agree to serve in a representative capacity.

I would like to express my thanks to you and members of the Passenger Rail Advisory Committee for considering my nomination and I hope to serve with you in this capacity.

Sincerely,

Phillip L. Bell/s/

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