



**BALTIMORE
METROPOLITAN
COUNCIL**

Ms. Cynthia T. Brown
Chief, Section of Administration
Office of Proceedings
Surface Transportation Board
395 E Street,
SW Washington, DC 20423

247472

ENTERED
Office of Proceedings
April 12, 2019
Part of
Public Record

RE: Docket EP 753 - Petition for Rulemaking

Dear Ms. Brown,

These comments, filed on behalf of the Baltimore Metropolitan Council, are in support of a petition by Rails-to-Trails Conservancy (RTC) for the Surface Transportation Board (STB) to establish a one-year period for any initial interim trail use negotiating period and codify the STB's authority to grant extensions of the negotiating period for good cause shown.

As I'm sure you are aware, trail development in the Baltimore region is often a very complex process. Further, depending upon the circumstances surrounding any particular project the initial negotiation period can easily extend beyond the established standards. It is for this reason we believe that the establishment of a one-year period for any initial interim trail use negotiating period and codification of authority for the STB to grant extensions of the negotiating period for good cause shown would fairly serve all interests and not violate statutory language, goals, and articulated public policy to promote and encourage railbanking and interim trail use. We urge the STB to act promptly to initiate a rulemaking proceeding and to codify the changes sought in the



RTC petition in order to provide improved administrative clarity for all parties and stakeholders involved in railbanking negotiations.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment and for your consideration of this matter.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "MB Kelly", is positioned above the printed name.

Michael B. Kelly
Executive Director,
Baltimore Metropolitan Council



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Michael B. Kelly
Executive Director,
Baltimore Metropolitan Council