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

RE: Comments regarding Docket EP 728

As Mayors for four cities which are served by Amtrak Cascades, we see the proposed changes within the Surface Transportation Board's Docket EP 728 as detrimental to implementing our state and local goals regarding passenger rail services, carbon emission reductions, and increased economic vitality.

We collectively served on the Oregon Passenger Rail Leadership Council, established by Governor Kitzhaber to guide the Oregon Passenger Rail (OPR) project. The group recently completed a recommendation to Governor Brown and the Oregon Transportation Commission on a preferred alignment for intercity passenger rail developments that would improve frequency and availability of trains in the 126-mile segment from Eugene to Portland.

The final Selected Alternative increases ridership and reduces costs. Working with key stakeholders including the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) and Amtrak, the improvements outlined in the Selected Alternative would allow the current route to handle six roundtrips per day and see an increase in ridership by 90-percent over the next 20 years. This work and the targeted outcomes, not to mention the incredible amount of time and financial resources deployed to complete the project, are severely jeopardized by the current proposals before the Surface Transportation Board (STB).

Therefore, we respectfully ask that you:

1. **Withdraw the proposed policy about Preference:** STB should not rewrite federal law as it has proposed, but rather should adhere to federal law and ensure that railroads continue to grant preference to Amtrak passenger trains operating on their tracks.
2. **Use STB's review powers that have been granted to the agency:** When delays exist or where railroads have requested relief, undertake federally-directed reviews to analyze conditions on affected routes and recommend remedies.

3. **Measure on-time performance at all stations:** STB should not limit its review of on-time performance solely to originating and terminating times on routes. Such an action would mean that on-time preference would never be measured in more than 20 states serving scores of cities along the routes.

We thank you for your consideration and attention to this vital issue.



Mayor Kitty Piercy
City of Eugene



Mayor Charlie Hales
City of Portland



Mayor Sharon Konopa
City of Albany



Mayor Anna Peterson
City of Salem