



September 27, 2018

The Honorable Elaine Chao
Secretary
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary –

The Coalition for the Northeast Corridor (CNEC) was formed to help policymakers understand the critical importance of the NEC to our Nation and our businesses. This region between Boston and Washington, DC, generates 30 percent of all U.S. jobs and \$3 trillion annually. It helps fuel the U.S. economy from coast to coast. As an important first step toward enhancing this region's and our nation's economic security, we are writing to urge you to release the \$275 million appropriated by Congress.

We take our corporate citizenship seriously, because we understand the consequences of continued inaction if NEC infrastructure repairs remain neglected. The NEC supports 780,000 commuter trips and 40,000 intercity trips per day, but it is plagued by failing infrastructure from which a single bridge or tunnel incident could bring this economic engine to a grinding halt for months. Losing the NEC for a single day could cost the country \$100 million in productivity losses and broader transportation impacts.

Congress understood the severity of this national infrastructure crisis when it included more than \$275 million in the 2017 and 2018 Appropriations bills for a newly authorized Federal-State Partnership of Good Repair ("SOGR"). With both Republican and Democratic support, this is the first major funded program for passenger rail infrastructure that was both authorized and appropriated by a Republican-controlled Congress – reaffirming the fact that the NEC is America's most economically critical transportation asset whose failure will have national implications.

The Department of Transportation has yet to release these funds. Doing so would allow multiple projects between Boston and Washington, DC, to move forward which are necessary to get the NEC closer to a state of good repair.

Our Coalition joins the nine Members of Congress who this past week appealed to DOT to release the Appropriated funds so that critical work can commence. We simply cannot wait any longer. We note that this funding could have been used to mitigate the risk of NEC infrastructure failure from this and future hurricane seasons, as we experienced with Superstorm Sandy, which nearly six years ago caused billions of dollars of damage. The Northeast Corridor was lucky and spared by Hurricane Florence, but that luck could change as soon as this winter.

Madam Secretary, the nearly 1 million Americans relying on the NEC to get to work and return home safely to their families every day are relying on the NEC to maintain their quality of life, and the government to maintain its responsibility.

We are ready to assist. Thank you for your attention to our request.

The Coalition for the Northeast Corridor