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Brookline Area Community Council
Carnegie CDC
Community Leaders United for
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East Allegheny Community Council
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Economic Development South
Fineview Citizens Council
Friendship Development Associates
Garfield Jubilee Association
Hazelwood Initiative, Inc.
Highland Park CDC
Hill CDC
Hill District Consensus Group
Hill House EDC
Hilltop Alliance
Housing Alliance of Pennsylvania
Larimer Consensus Group
Lawrenceville Corp.
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Manchester Citizens Corp.
McKees-Rocks CDC
Mexican War Streets Society
Millvale Borough Development Corp.
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Northside Leadership Conference
Oakland Planning and Development
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Operation Better Block
Perry Hilltop Citizens Council
Penn Hills CDC
Pittsburgh Downtown CDC
Pittsburgh Project
Polish Hill Civic Association
Ross Economic Development
South Side Community Council
South Side Local Development
Company
South Side Slopes Neighborhood
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Troy Hill Citizens, Inc.
Tube City Renaissance
Uptown Partners of Pittsburgh
Urban Innovation21
West Pittsburgh Partnership
Wilksburg CDC

December 4, 2014

Pennsylvania Department of Transportation
400 North St., 6th Floor
Harrisburg, PA 17120

ATTN: Messr. Barry Schoch, PE; PennDOT Secretary

Ref: Amtrak Pennsylvanian service expansion between Pittsburgh and points east

Secretary Schoch;

The Pittsburgh Community Reinvestment Group, a membership-based federation of 52 community and economic development corporations and neighborhood groups, representing the urban core of Allegheny County, strongly supports the expansion of Amtrak's Pennsylvanian service to 3 trains per day.

PCRG's membership service area encompasses over 600,000 residents of urban southwestern PA, as well as the lion's share of the region's economic activity. We focus on access to reinvestment capital, unlocking blighted and abandoned land for redevelopment, and access to quality, affordable transportation choices to bring opportunities to communities and residents too often left behind. Usable intercity passenger rail service is vital to our membership and, in fact, Pittsburgh's vitality.

Pittsburgh sits within 500 miles of over half of the US population. From a mobility perspective, ironically, this increasingly hinders our economic competitiveness. Direct air service to major economic centers is on the decline and increasingly unaffordable – and nonexistent between here and Harrisburg. Intercity bus faces similar issues, leaving only with expensive auto passage that overburdens PA's highways. Passenger rail provides a viable alternative that is also less subject to the price volatilities of other modes – for the operator or the consumer – but only one train a day seriously hampers the Pennsylvanian's usability.

A recent report, *On Track to Accessibility*, makes clear that adding two more trains the highly efficient Pennsylvanian route has practically no downside. The report's conservative estimates show a clear return on investment. Ridership would nearly double. It's also a fraction of the cost of other alternatives, much more easily implemented, could spur station-area development, and relieve the burden on Pennsylvania's highways and bridges.

Pittsburgh needs and deserves more resilient transportation choices. We urge you to take this first step and request additional Pennsylvanian service. Thank you for your time and please feel free to contact us if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Ernie Hogan
Executive Director

LaShawn Burton-Faulk
Board Chair