



## SOUTHWESTERN PENNSYLVANIA COMMISSION

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March 30, 2015

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Acting Secretary Leslie S. Richards  
Pennsylvania Department of Transportation  
400 North Street, 6<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Harrisburg, PA 17120

Re: Pennsylvania Amtrak Passenger Rail Service Expansion

Dear Acting Secretary Richards:

This letter is to express The Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission's support for increasing passenger rail service along Amtrak's Pennsylvania service route between Pittsburgh and Philadelphia/New York City from one train daily to three. Increasing this service from one to three trains daily would provide much better access for the many people traveling to Pittsburgh and points west, and Harrisburg and points east along the Pennsylvania. In addition, increasing efficient, multi-modal options for travelers has a positive impact on decreasing highway congestion and improving air quality in the Southwestern Pennsylvania region and across the Commonwealth.

A recent study by the Pittsburgh Downtown Partnership titled "On Track to Accessibility" suggests ridership would nearly double with the additional daily service, along with a corresponding increase in passenger revenue from tickets and other services. The substantial increase in multi-modal funds available through Act 89 has made the Commonwealth's financial commitment more attainable.

As the Metropolitan Planning Organization for Southwestern Pennsylvania, we would like to point out that this proposal is consistent with our region's 2040 Transportation Plan, specifically the following policies/strategies:

- Transportation and development choices will reflect a priority on safe and secure multimodal and intermodal networks for both people and goods.
- Emphasize a strong multimodal focus including highways, transit, railways and waterways.

I would like to thank the Commonwealth for its consideration and encourage PennDOT to enter into discussions with Amtrak to increase passenger rail service along Amtrak's Pennsylvania service route between Pittsburgh and Philadelphia/New York City from one train daily to three.

Sincerely,

Steve Craig  
Chairman, Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission  
Commissioner, Lawrence County Board of Commissioners