

THOM TILLIS
NORTH CAROLINA

113 DIRKSEN SENATE OFFICE BLDG
WASHINGTON, DC 20510
PH: (202) 224-6342

<https://tillis.senate.gov>

COMMITTEES

ARMED SERVICES
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United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

December 28, 2019

The Honorable Elaine L. Chao
Secretary of Transportation
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, Southeast
Washington, DC 20590

Re: FY19 Federal Rail Administration Federal-State Partnership for State of Good Repair
North Carolina Department of Transportation
Piedmont Intercity Fleet & Infrastructure Investments Project Phase II

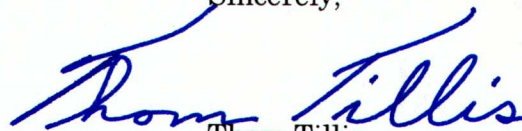
Dear Secretary Chao,

I am pleased to support the application submitted by the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) Rail Division for funding through the United States Department of Transportation Federal Rail Administration's Federal-State Partnership for State of Good Repair grant program (Partnership Program) in the amount of \$80,000,000.

NCDOT indicates that the Piedmont Intercity Fleet & Infrastructure Investments Project Phase II will build upon the previously awarded Partnership Program funds that will replace the Piedmont fleet's oldest railcars and provide a maintenance facility to accommodate the needs of new equipment. It is my understanding that funding for Phase II of the project will be used to replace the remaining railcars and locomotives to create a new rail fleet for the NCDOT Piedmont route. The Piedmont fleet currently uses rail passenger cars that were originally manufactured between 1964 and 1965 and are among the oldest in the U.S. The route serves passengers between Charlotte and Raleigh (additional station stops include Kannapolis, Salisbury, High Point, Greensboro, Burlington, Durham, and Cary). The project will help maintain existing rail opportunities for rail travel across the region and facilitate additional frequencies along the Piedmont service in the future. It will also leverage the Charlotte Gateway Station investments being made through city, state and federal funding.

Improved transportation and related infrastructure are critical to the quality of life, job growth, sustainability, and enhanced safety in our state and region, and I thank you for your consideration of NCDOT's request for funding. Please feel free to contact my Raleigh office at 919-856-4630 if you have questions regarding this request.

Sincerely,



Thom Tillis
U.S. Senator

TRT/lm

CHARLOTTE OFFICE:
9300 HARRIS CORNERS PKWY
SUITE 170
CHARLOTTE, NC 28269
PH: (704) 509-9087

RALEIGH OFFICE:
310 NEW BERN AVE
SUITE 122
RALEIGH, NC 27601
PH: (919) 856-4630

HIGH POINT OFFICE:
1840 EASTCHESTER DR
SUITE 200
HIGH POINT, NC 27265
PH: (336) 885-0685

GREENVILLE OFFICE:
1694 E ARLINGTON BLVD
SUITE B
GREENVILLE, NC 27858
PH: (252) 329-0371

HENDERSONVILLE OFFICE:
1 HISTORIC COURTHOUSE SQ
SUITE 112
HENDERSONVILLE, NC 28792
PH: (828) 693-8750