



January 23, 2012

To: The New Hampshire Congressional Delegation

Dear Senator Shaheen, Senator Ayotte, Congressman Bass, and Congressman Guinta,

The University of New Hampshire Graduate Student Senate represents approximately 2300 full-time and part-time graduate students who live and vote in New Hampshire. Our membership is concerned about the elimination of federal funding for Amtrak services that are partially supported by state funds that was proposed by the House transportation subcommittee late last year. The vast majority of our constituency opposes this budget cut on the grounds that the cut would eliminate the Amtrak Downeaster service, which has become an integral part of the mass-transit network in New Hampshire and is an important means of transportation for the students, faculty and staff of the University of New Hampshire. As detailed in the attached resolution, we believe that continued support of passenger rail service and expansion of routes to include Manchester and Concord would benefit New Hampshire students and help grow the state's economy.

While this issue has been temporarily resolved, we hope that you will consider our concerns during your next round of federal budget negotiations and continue to provide the funding necessary to keep the Amtrak Downeaster running.

Sincerely,

The UNH Graduate Student Senate

Bob Swarthout, President

Daniel Budak, Vice President

John McClain, Treasurer

Ian Cohen, USNH Board of Trustees Representative

Emily Klein, Programs Coordinator

Michael Staley, Clerk

UNH Graduate Student Senate

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University of New Hampshire Graduate Student Senate

Resolution 2011:5

November 29, 2011

**Support for Continued Federal Funding of Amtrak**

WHEREAS, since December 2001, the students of this university have benefited directly from the Amtrak Downeaster as part of an integrated, multimodal, regional passenger transportation system that provides energy efficient, environmentally positive and cost-effective travel; and

WHEREAS, passenger rail service in general, and Amtrak's Downeaster service in particular, encourages economic development and access to our community at a rate which is higher than other modes of transportation; and

WHEREAS, a modern national passenger train system is an essential element of a truly balanced transportation plan, relieving congestion on our highways and in the air, lowering pollution levels, increasing travel safety and improving regional access to Durham; and

WHEREAS, all modes of transportation systems require public investment; and

WHEREAS, some proposals in Congress would substantially reduce funding for Amtrak generally and eliminate all funding for State-supported Amtrak service, including the Downeaster; and

WHEREAS, the Downeaster can only operate with continued federal financial support, not only of that service, but of Amtrak's national passenger rail system; and

WHEREAS, continued federal funding of Amtrak at levels which are at least as high as those currently in place is essential to ensure the continued existence of the Downeaster service and to protect investments which have been made, and continue to be made, in that service;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, by the Graduate Student Senate of the University of New Hampshire that it is and shall continue to be the policy of this University, which benefits from daily Downeaster service, to take all actions necessary to support continued and, if reasonably possible, the expansion of passenger rail service to this municipality and surrounding regions; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Graduate Student Senate strongly opposes attempts by some in Congress to offer amendments that might adversely impact Amtrak or other programs which improve accessibility and access to the Durham community; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Graduate Student Senate encourages the efforts of our neighboring states, DOTs, Rail Authorities and advocacy groups such as TrainRiders Northeast to ensure continued support of passenger rail systems throughout the region; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Graduate Student Senate hereby requests that the Administration (including UNH-Manchester and UNH School of Law which might benefit from future rail corridor development) join us in adoption and communication of similar policies to all members of the Congressional delegation and the Governor, as well as to such other parties as may be helpful in achieving the goals and objectives of this resolution.

Graduate Student Senate

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