

Congress of the United States  
House of Representatives  
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May 24, 2024

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The Honorable Anthony Coscia  
Chairman  
Amtrak Headquarters  
1 Massachusetts Ave, NW  
Washington, DC 20001

Dear Chairman Coscia,


I write regarding the severe infrastructure failures earlier this week on Amtrak rails that New Jersey Transit trains also use, including the North Jersey Coast Rail Line used by constituents of New Jersey's Sixth Congressional District. According to reports, an overhead wire malfunction triggered hours-long delays for thousands of commuters traveling between New Jersey and New York City. Some commuters had no choice but to pay exorbitant fees for rides home, and others were forced to wait long into the evening to get home.

With my strong support, Congress passed the historic Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) in 2021 to repair and make more reliable infrastructure in New Jersey and around the country. After these historic and record-breaking investments, any failure of this magnitude is entirely unacceptable. Congress passed over \$2.4 billion for Amtrak as part of the Fiscal Year 2024 spending bill to inject immediate investments into rail infrastructure across the country. The BIL authorized \$36 billion over five years for the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) Federal-State Partnership for Intercity Passenger Rail (IPR) program, including \$24 billion specifically for the Northeast Corridor modernization. This funding is meant to support capital projects that reduce the state of good repair backlog and bring our public transportation systems back to working order and ensure the American commuting public trusts that they can commute to work safely and efficiently.

Amtrak must do more to improve the performance of our IPR systems by using the funding Congress made available for its intended purpose: a safe, reliable transportation system. I urge you to specifically focus your attention and funding on the Northeast Corridor to ensure a commuter network serving thousands of Americans a day is not impacted by further delays like we saw this week.

Congress delivered on its commitment to passing historic investments to help fix our nation's broken infrastructure, including billions of dollars for Amtrak and Amtrak's partners. It's past time Amtrak targeted these investments to ensure reliable service New Jersey families deserve. On behalf of New Jersey's Congressional delegation, I am requesting a meeting with you and your staff so Amtrak can explain what caused the overhead wire issues, share reliability metrics, and a status update on infrastructure investments Congress made possible so that we can prevent infrastructure failures like this one in the future.

I look forward to your prompt response.

Sincerely,  
  
FRANK PALLONE, JR

Cc: The Honorable Peter Buttigieg, Secretary, Department of Transportation