



Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-1501

February 5, 2021

The Honorable Pete Buttigieg
Secretary
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue SE
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

Congratulations on your confirmation. As the second most senior member of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, I write to request that you direct the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) to work with the District of Columbia government, the local community and other stakeholders to substantially revise FRA's proposal for the Washington Union Station Expansion Project (Project). FRA must stop wasting time on a proposal that fails to meet the needs of the surrounding neighborhood, the District of Columbia and Union Station itself, and that will not be approved by the National Capital Planning Commission (NCPC). The Project is a historic opportunity to create a multimodal facility that is seamlessly integrated into a thriving mixed-use neighborhood. FRA's proposal fails to meet the moment.

Among other problems with the proposal, the Project includes too many parking spaces for cars. NCPC, which has approval authority for the Project, has asked FRA to "substantially reduce" the number of parking spaces and to work with all the stakeholders to determine the appropriate amount of parking in light of the "mix of uses, traffic and urban design impacts and the transit-oriented nature of the [P]roject." In order to truly become a 21st-century multimodal facility, the Project needs to address pedestrian and bike connections, which are increasing modes of transportation here, as well as pick-up and drop-off locations and the bus facility.

Andrew Trueblood, Director of the D.C. Office of Planning, has warned that FRA's desired number of parking spaces would undermine the key goals for the Project, including prioritizing intermodal efficacy and efficiency and providing continued and enhanced quality of life for people who live, work and visit the District. D.C. Councilmember Charles Allen, who represents the neighborhood, and members of the local community have echoed these concerns.

I got a provision included in the report accompanying the fiscal year 2021 appropriations bill that directed FRA to continue working with the District on the Project and to consider the feedback of all stakeholders, including residents of affected neighborhoods, in its planning process. For the Project to be successful, FRA must be responsive to the concerns of the District, the local community and other stakeholders.

Thank you for considering my request. Please respond in writing by March 5, 2021.

Sincerely,



Eleanor Holmes Norton
Member of Congress

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