



COLORADO
Gov. John Hickenlooper

September 7, 2018

The Honorable Michael Bennet
United States Senate

The Honorable Cory Gardner
United States Senate

The Honorable Diana DeGette
United States House of Representatives

The Honorable Jared Polis
United States House of Representatives

The Honorable Scott Tipton
United States House of Representatives

The Honorable Ken Buck
United States House of Representatives

The Honorable Doug Lamborn
United States House of Representatives

The Honorable Mike Coffman
United States House of Representatives

The Honorable Ed Perlmutter
United States House of Representatives

Sent via email on 09/07/18 to respective Legislative Directors

Dear Honorable Members of the Colorado Congressional Delegation:

On behalf of our Administration, we urge you to support the passenger rail provisions contained in H.R. 6147, *“Interior, Environment, Financial Services and General Government, Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Transportation, Housing, and Urban Development Appropriations Act, 2019.”* This appropriation Bill has important implications for our state.

For the past several months, we have been following the growing concern over the future of the Amtrak national interstate passenger rail system, and its restructuring and elimination of stops on the Amtrak Southwest Chief and California Zephyr routes because of safety and cost considerations. As you know, both passenger trains provide needed daily passenger rail service across portions of Colorado. Furthermore, Amtrak has also been publicly positioning the railroad to focus only on operating on 300 to 500 mile corridors service between large urban centers, essentially eliminating rural service and ending the national interstate system Congress intended when Amtrak was established and began operating in 1971. Eliminating service to Southeastern Colorado and replacing it with overnight buses will remove an important mobility and economic contributor to our state.

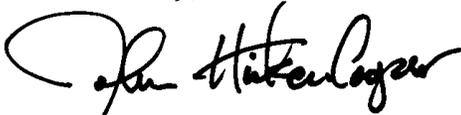


The route of the Chief meets current Federal Railroad Administration's safety requirements. However, placing passengers on a bus may subject them to much higher safety risks than travel by passenger rail. Furthermore, if Amtrak replaces portions of the California Zephyr with bus service in the future, it may further increase these safety concerns.

With regard to costs, through partnerships with Kansas, New Mexico, impacted communities, the BNSF Railway, and Amtrak, we have raised \$71 million to support improvements to the route since 2015. In H.R. 6147, the Senate amendment redirects \$50 million of Amtrak's appropriation to address Amtrak's needs for the route. H.R. 6147 also continues adequate funding levels for rail service and infrastructure necessary to continue Amtrak's interstate service.

We encourage you to support Colorado's rural communities by supporting the amendment to H.R. 6147 and ensuring that the \$50 million appropriation makes its way onto the final version of this bill. Thank you for your consideration of our request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "John W. Hickenlooper". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "J" and "H".

John W. Hickenlooper
Governor