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February 5, 2024

The Honorable Martin J. Oberman
Chairman
Surface Transportation Board
395 E Street SW
Washington, DC 20423

Dear Chairman Oberman,

On behalf of the American Public Transportation Association (APTA), which represents the \$79 billion public transportation industry that provides mobility for millions of Americans each year, directly employs 430,000 people, and supports millions of private-sector jobs, **I write to endorse the nomination of Mr. Justin R. Vonashek for the Passenger Rail Advisory Committee (PRAC) as a representative of a commuter rail operator whose facilities are utilized by Amtrak. Mr. Vonashek was nominated to the PRAC by Ms. Catherine Rinaldi, President of Metro-North Railroad and Chair of APTA's Commuter Rail Committee.**

Mr. Vonashek is the Executive Vice President & Chief Operating Officer of Metro-North Railroad, which provides regional and commuter rail transportation in Manhattan and the Bronx in addition to communities north and east of New York City in New York State and Connecticut. Multiple Metro-North lines host Amtrak Northeast Corridor services, and Metro-North is currently negotiating with Amtrak to expand services to Amtrak's New York Penn Station.

Mr. Vonashek has served in his current role for the past three years. Previously, he served as Metro-North's Vice President of System Safety. Before working for Metro-North, Mr. Vonashek worked for Keolis Commuter Services in Boston, MA, and Metra in Chicago, IL. Throughout his career, he has consistently worked for organizations that had host and tenant relationships with Amtrak, and he will bring this wealth of experience to the PRAC.

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Mr. Vonashek also serves as the Chair of the Commuter Rail Chief Operating Officers Subcommittee of APTA's Commuter Rail Committee. In this role, Mr. Vonashek regularly interacts with Chief Operating Officers from commuter rail agencies across the nation at APTA conferences and workshops where members discuss and collaborate on problems facing the commuter rail industry.

With the highest respect and praise, APTA enthusiastically endorses the nomination of Mr. Justin R. Vonashek to serve on the Passenger Rail Advisory Committee as a representative of a commuter rail operator whose facilities are utilized by Amtrak.

Sincerely,



Paul P. Skoutelas
President and CEO

cc: The Honorable Karen J. Hedlund, Vice Chairman, Surface Transportation Board Member

The Honorable Patrick J. Fuchs, Surface Transportation Board Member

The Honorable Robert E. Primus, Surface Transportation Board Member

The Honorable Michelle A. Schultz, Surface Transportation Board Member

Mr. Brian O'Boyle, Designated Federal Officer – Passenger Rail Advisory Committee,
Surface Transportation Board