

United States Senate

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February 12, 2024

Chairman Martin Oberman
Surface Transportation Board
395 E St. SW
Washington, DC 20423

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Dear Chairman Oberman:

I am writing to express my support for the nominations of Robert Padgette and Lori Winfree to serve on the Surface Transportation Passenger Rail Advisory Committee (Committee).

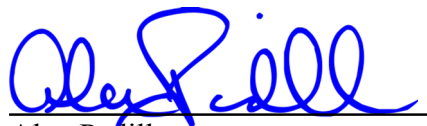
As you know, California is home to some of the busiest intercity rail corridors in the country. Our state has an important perspective on maintaining efficient and collaborative operations between commuter, passenger, and freight rail operators. That is why I write in support of two Californians to serve on the Committee.

Robert Padgette is responsible for the oversight of the 170-mile Capitol Corridor Rail service between Auburn and San Jose, California, the third busiest intercity rail corridor in the country. As Managing Director of the Capitol Corridor Joint Powers Authority (CCJPA), he has led the organization through one of the most challenging times in its history and is actively improving the corridor to expand service for the first time since 2006. CCJPA works collaboratively with Union Pacific Railroad and Amtrak to deliver one of the highest on-time performance levels in the country. Mr. Padgette has played an important role in national rail policy through his service as Chair of the State-Amtrak Intercity Passenger Rail Committee (SAIPRC) from 2020 to 2023, a period that required a high degree of collaboration among states to preserve services during the pandemic.

Lori Winfree has served as North County Transit District's General Counsel for over a decade. Ms. Winfree is responsible for District-wide compliance and legal oversight related to the Department of Transportation, Federal Transit Administration, and Federal Railroad Administration regulations. Ms. Winfree is responsible for overseeing the procurement of all rail-related operations and maintenance services and negotiating all operations and use agreements with NCTD's tenants, including Amtrak and BNSF Railway, and the State of California Division of Rail and Mass Transit. As a tenant, Amtrak operates part of the Pacific Surfliner intercity service on NCTD's tracks, operating 26 trips daily between Los Angeles and San Diego. This is Amtrak's second busiest intercity passenger rail corridor in the nation. Ms. Winfree works closely with operations and maintenance staff to ensure safe and timely rail operations and positive coordination with NCTD's rail partners.

The voices and experiences of Mr. Padgette and Ms. Winfree will provide important input and perspective to the Committee. I urge you to give them full and fair consideration.

Sincerely,



Alex Padilla
United States Senator