

**ROBERT J. WITTMAN**

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**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

August 17, 2020

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The Honorable Elaine L. Chao  
Secretary  
United States Department of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE  
Washington, DC 20590

**RE: Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development (BUILD) grant for the Hanover Third Track project**

Dear Secretary Chao,

I am writing to express my support for the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation's (DRPT) application for a Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development (BUILD) grant for the Hanover Third Track project. The project includes construction of a 2.9-mile long passing track in a rural portion of Hanover County, Virginia that will add capacity and reduce conflicts between freight and passenger trains.

The RF&P rail corridor running between Washington, DC and Richmond, VA is a central component of the east coast rail transportation system, connecting the northeast and southeast freight rail networks and extending the spine of the nation's intercity passenger rail system. Investing in capacity improvements to support projected increases in freight and passenger rail traffic along this corridor is crucial to continued economic growth and enhanced mobility in the region.

The Commonwealth of Virginia is committed to expanding service and increasing the reliability of its rail service. This is evidenced by Virginia Governor Ralph Northam's December 19, 2019 announcement of a landmark \$3.7 billion rail agreement between the Commonwealth of Virginia and CSXT. The rail improvements included in the agreement, including the Hanover Third Track project, will allow for increased freight and passenger rail service between Richmond, VA and Washington, DC and will improve safety, service, and reliability along the corridor.

Please give full and fair consideration of recommendation for this key project to increase capacity and improve freight and passenger rail operations in Virginia. Thank you for your favorable consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Robert J. Wittman".

Robert J. Wittman  
Member of Congress