

Dear Governor Malloy and Transportation Committee,

I'd like to add my
voice
to those
support
ing

H.B. 6343: An act concerning the restoration of the Housatonic Railroad line.

As a longtime Berkshire second home owner, I am well aware of not only what a convenience passenger rail service to the area would be for me and others like me, but what an economic boon it would be to the region.

Over the past two years, with grant support from the Federal Highway Administration, BRPC was able to work with the six directly affected Berkshire municipalities and citizens from throughout the region to develop a plan for passenger rail stations in the Berkshires if service should be established on this line. With very few exceptions, local and state officials and residents voiced strong support for this project.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts has recently purchased the underlying real estate and track from the Housatonic Railroad Company, joining Connecticut in now having control of the physical ass

et.

Massachusetts

is committing \$35 million in 2015 to rebuild the tracks in Massachusetts to bring them up to current standards, which will be able to support passenger rail service

, although the immediate beneficiaries will be

the existing industrial users

, specifically

Connecticut-based

Becton-Dickinson and Specialty Minerals

. Improvements to the line will help prevent the derailments to which the tracks have become prone for lack of maintenance and upgrading.

Like Berkshire county, where I spend time, Litchfield County

is a

relatively rural regions which ha

s

benefitted from

its status as a vacation and second-home haven for New Yorkers like me. But it has also

similarly
suffered from the loss of high quality manufacturing jobs and the subsequent drain of
its
younger, more educated population.
Better transportation is a key to both supporting and sustaining the influx of cash that outsiders
like myself bring and
to attract
ing
younger families and workers
, who have (thank god) a more progressive, energy- and economy-conscious idea of what makes
a good and sustainable place to live and work.
They want to living in more concentrated walkable centers than their parents and grandparents
do.
So
reintroducing passenger rail service in our regions is a very important strategic investment in
their
futures
and the futures of my children

I hope you will lend your wholehearted support to this and other measures that will get the trains
to the Berkshires rolling again. It's been too long.

Yours sincerely,
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