

NEW YORK  
STATE  
LEGISLATURE

THE SENATE  
ALBANY, NEW YORK 12247

THE ASSEMBLY  
ALBANY, NEW YORK 12248



February 17, 2011

Honorable Raymond H. LaHood  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE  
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary LaHood:

We are writing with respect to the decision of Florida Governor Rick Scott's rejection of federal funds for the development of a high speed passenger rail system and urge you to re-appropriate these funds to New York State for the development and implementation of a similarly based system.

New York would be well served if it addressed some of the stresses placed on intercity transit by the creation of a high speed rail corridor. If accomplished, this rail program has the potential to expand the Western New York labor market as well as offer open access to Canadian markets, thus creating an international gateway to hubs such as Toronto, Montreal and New York City.

Enhanced passenger rail service can offer expeditious, easy, environmentally friendly and energy efficient travel. As a federally designated priority High Speed Rail corridor, this route will provide hassle free intercity connections between Buffalo/Niagara, Rochester, Syracuse, Utica, Albany and Plattsburgh and serve as a pivotal link between the Midwest High Speed Rail network and the East Coast.

New York has faced many challenges as of late: an upstate economy and population that are in serious decline as well as immense job loss. This funding presents New Yorkers with an opportunity to help quell the devastating effects the declining economy has had on our upstate cities by offering economic revitalization, job creation in the high-tech, construction, operational and service sectors, as well as reducing our dependence on foreign oil.

New York is no stranger to bold efforts, particularly in times of great financial distress. Decades ago, New York invested in the creation of the Erie Canal, along the same east-west corridor as the proposed high speed rail line. The canal paved the way for New York's well-earned reputation as the center of our nation's commerce. A high speed rail program can provide a much needed direct stimulus to the economic life that our upstate communities deserve.

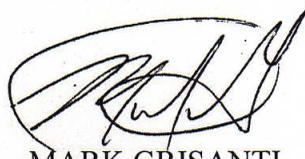
Recent commitments of federal government dollars to invest in such high speed rail projects has instilled a renewed sense of urgency amongst New Yorkers to facilitate a plan that will meet those needs. The New York State Department of Transportation has worked to create a 20-year rail plan which would serve as the basis for the creation of a high speed rail line from Western New York to Albany. A high-speed rail authority can then take the next step and carry out the vision articulated in such a plan.

We want to thank you for your cogent commitment to improving the future of our railways and modernizing our transportation systems. We look forward to working in conjunction with you to bring our state's transportation infrastructure into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

Sincerely,



SAM HOYT  
MEMBER OF ASSEMBLY



MARK GRISANTI  
SENATOR