



July 27, 2015

Dear Senator:

As you know, the Senate's long-term transportation funding proposal includes a limited, 3-year extension for railroads to implement Positive Train Control (PTC). The delay is not a blanket extension as it requires each railroad to submit implementation plans to the Department of Transportation and grants the Secretary the power to reject inadequate plans on a case-by-case basis.

While the SMART Transportation Division and the Transportation Communications Union have urged the swift implementation of PTC for years, we also understand the reality that many railroads will simply not be able to meet the December 31, 2015 deadline.

The current deadline poses an especially difficult challenge to our nation's commuter railroads that lack the substantial revenues of their Class I freight counterparts. The MARC and VRE railroads have already announced plans to discontinue service at the beginning of next year in order to avoid penalties, if the deadline is not extended. Such decisions will cause significant disruptions in our nation's rail network and put thousands of hardworking men and women in the rail industry, including our members, out of work through no fault of their own.

That being said, Amtrak is still committed to installing PTC on the Northeast Corridor – its busiest route and the site of the tragic Philadelphia accident – by the end of this year.

Once again, we share the legitimate concerns of many about the delayed implementation of PTC, but also recognize the reality of the current situation, and ask that you do not allow this provision to derail a potential, long-term transportation funding compromise.

On behalf of the SMART Transportation Division and the Transportation Communications Union, we urge you to support this bipartisan PTC compromise and thank you in advance for your consideration of our views.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John Risch".

John Risch
National Legislative Director
SMART Transportation Division

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ron Kloos".

Ron Kloos
National Vice President/National Legislative Director
Transportation Communications Union/IAM