

United States Senate

October 22, 2018

COMMITTEES:
BANKING, HOUSING, AND
URBAN AFFAIRS
COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND
TRANSPORTATION
ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES
AGING
INDIAN AFFAIRS
RULES AND ADMINISTRATION

Richard H. Anderson
President and Chief Executive Officer
Amtrak
1 Massachusetts Ave NW
Washington, DC 20001

Dear Mr. Anderson:

As the National Railroad Passenger Corporation (Amtrak) evaluates its current budget and operations, I strongly urge you to avoid any downgrades or reductions in service along the California Zephyr line. In fact, it is my understanding that Amtrak has previously approved *expanding* service to a new station on this line in West Wendover, Nevada. While this has never been completed, I firmly support expanding service to this new station, which would provide a cost effective, regular means of transportation for rural Nevadans and other travelers.

Amtrak's own statistics show consistent increases in ridership over the past five years, including over 88,000 Nevada boardings and alightings in Fiscal Year 2017. This indicates that there is great interest in this passenger rail line in Northern Nevada. But numbers alone cannot demonstrate how important this service is to our rural residents. Current stops in places like Elko and Winnemucca are heavily utilized by seniors and veterans to reach vital medical services in larger communities such as Reno, NV.

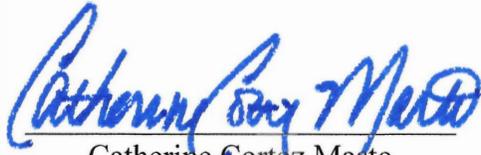
Recently, concerned over potential service reductions on the California Zephyr line, Winnemucca Mayor Di An Putnam wrote me directly to underscore the importance of the Zephyr line's transportation service to her community and region. In the letter she states, "The train service is an important part of the economic vitality and social fabric of my community." Mayor Putnam highlighted, as have other leaders in rural Nevada, that Amtrak's service is imperative when other public transportation options for rural communities are dwindling.

These reasons demonstrate why providing strong consideration to West Wendover's request for an Amtrak stop along the California Zephyr is so important. Mayor Daniel Corona, a fourth generation resident of West Wendover, firmly understands the needs of his community, as well as the opportunities created for residents and visitors to our state and the region. This reality is also reflected in Amtrak's own figures showing that tens of thousands of tourists utilize your service, sustaining our rural economies and communities with hundreds of thousands of dollars in additional spending.

I urge you to consider this additional stop and understand how detrimental any reduction in Zephyr line services would be to the entire region of Northern Nevada. I look forward to working with you on Amtrak operations and appreciate your attention to these issues. If there is

any way I can be of assistance or if you have any questions, please do not hesitate to reach out to me or my transportation staffer.

Sincerely,



Catherine Cortez Masto
United States Senator