

To the Honorable:

Robert C. Byrd, U.S. Senator from West Virginia
Jay Rockefeller, U.S. Senator from West Virginia

Shelley Moore Capito, Member of Congress, WV-2
Nick J. Rahall II, Member of Congress, WV-3

A RESOLUTION

Petitioning West Virginia's Federal representatives to sponsor legislation to fund a comprehensive study of the proposed "Steel Interstate" rail system pilot project between Knoxville, TN, and Harrisburg, PA, as a part of a National Steel Interstate System that would bring fast rail freight and passenger service to the nation

WHEREAS, Congress is considering investments in transportation, public health, renewable energy, energy efficiency, fuel conservation, greenhouse gas abatement, and public infrastructure as fiscal stimulus, and a National Steel Interstate rail system will promote all these goals, and

WHEREAS, Steel Interstate rail service would reduce Interstate truck traffic and dependence on imported oil, while enhancing safety, national security, and economic competitiveness, and

WHEREAS, a Steel Interstate System offers the nation greater transportation productivity at lower cost compared to equivalent interstate highway expansion, and

WHEREAS, today, no passenger rail service, diminishing airline service, and limited intercity public bus service exists within the I-81 corridor and surrounding region but Steel Interstate service allows for harmonious fast passenger and freight operation, and

WHEREAS, Steel Interstate technology offers positive advantages for communities, West Virginia, other Interstate 81 states, and the United States relating to cost, safety, economic growth, tourism development, and varied freight and passenger service options, and

WHEREAS, when electrified, the Steel Interstate System offers the U.S. opportunity to employ domestic, renewable energy sources and efficiency to drive transportation, and

WHEREAS since January, 2009, forty-three Virginia and eleven Tennessee governing bodies have voted in favor of this petition;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that we, the _____ of the _____ of _____, urgently petition our congressional delegation to work in concert with other I-81 Corridor representatives to sponsor and secure funding for a comprehensive study for the pilot segment (between Knoxville and Harrisburg) of a National Steel Interstate System.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the _____ asserts that the following should be included in the comprehensive study: 1) user surveys to identify attractive and cost-effective services to divert the most truckloads to rail and of potential passengers in this corridor, based on 79 MPH track speeds; 2) engineering and design to determine required infrastructure improvements, options, costs, and speed improvement potential; 3) determination of appropriate environmental permitting; 4) exploration of financing, repayment, ownership and partnership scenarios; and 5) review of appropriate state/federal/private or other cooperative agreements.

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the _____ strongly urges the Norfolk-Southern Corporation, as owner of the current rail right-of-way and provider of rail service in the I-81 corridor, to support and participate in the undertaking of the comprehensive study.

Signed this _____ day of _____, 2009.

Seal affixed.

_____, Chairman/Chairwoman/Mayor