

NATIONAL
DISABILITY RIGHTS
NETWORK



Protection & Advocacy for Individuals with Disabilities

December 15, 2020

Senator Richard Blumenthal
706 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Blumenthal:

The National Disability Rights Network (NDRN) would like to thank you for introducing S.4187, the “Intercity Passenger Rail Trust Fund Act”. NDRN applauds this legislation as it will provide intercity passenger rail a critically needed stable source of federal funds for capital investment projects.

NDRN is the voluntary membership association for the nationwide network of Protection and Advocacy (P&A) agencies. P&A agencies are congressionally mandated, cross disability organizations operating in every state, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Territories (American Samoa, Guam, Northern Mariana Islands, and the US Virgin Islands). There is also a P&A affiliated with the Native American Consortium which includes the Hopi, Navajo, and San Juan Southern Paiute Nations located in the Four Corners region of the Southwest.

NDRN is particularly supportive of this legislation as expenditures from the trust fund can be used for intercity passenger rail accessibility projects. NDRN and the P&A Network have taken a strong interest in the accessibility of rail transportation for a number of years, including issuing a report in 2013 on the failure of Amtrak to be accessible for people with disabilities. That report “All Aboard (Except People with Disabilities) Amtrak’s 23 Years of ADA Compliance Failure” can be found [here](#). While strides have been made toward an accessible rail system, as the report referenced above shows, accessibility problems continued to exist at Amtrak stations more than two decades after the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act. The report shows that much is left to be done around the country to ensure people with disabilities can access Amtrak services and thus we welcome additional funding to be used toward this effort.

Again, NDRN thanks you for introducing this important piece of legislation, which will improve accessibility for individuals with disabilities who use intercity passenger rail. We look forward to working with you to enact this legislation into law. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Cyrus Huncharek, Senior Public Policy Analyst, at cyrus.huncharek@ndrn.org.

Sincerely,

Curtis L. Decker
Executive Director