



Allegheny County  
Aspinwall  
Baldwin Borough  
Baldwin Township  
Bellevue  
Brentwood  
Carnegie  
Castle Shannon  
Crafton  
Dormont  
Edgewood  
Etna  
Green Tree  
Homestead  
Ingram  
Kennedy  
McKees Rocks  
Millvale  
Mount Lebanon  
Mount Oliver  
Munhall  
O'Hara  
Penn Hills  
Pittsburgh  
Reserve  
Robinson  
Ross  
Rosslyn Farms  
Scott  
Shaler  
Sharpsburg  
Stowe  
Swissvale  
West Homestead  
West Mifflin  
West View  
Whitehall  
Wilkinsburg

October 2014

Dear Secretary Schoch,

On behalf of the 37 member municipalities of the Congress of Neighboring Communities (CONNECT) we write to you today to ask that you request additional service of the Pennsylvanian from Amtrak. Currently, there is only one passenger rail train travelling each direction daily between Harrisburg and Pittsburgh. Increasing service to three trains a day in each direction would be economically beneficial for Allegheny County's urban core and the Commonwealth.

CONNECT is an association of elected and appointed officials from the City of Pittsburgh and the 36 municipalities that comprise the urban core of Allegheny County, representing a population of nearly 700,000. As the first alliance of Pittsburgh's urban core, CONNECT has considerable demographic and economic strength, representing 56% of the population of Allegheny County, and housing 67% of the county's jobs.

Our residents have fewer transportation options within a 500 mile radius than they have in the past 40 years. Today, for example, there are no flights that go directly from Pittsburgh to Harrisburg, and the increasing consolidation of the airline industry has made air travel an unaffordable and inconvenient transportation choice for many. Travel by automobile is one of the only options available to many of our residents and it is also one of the most costly ways to travel. 40 years ago, there were 8 passenger rail trips a day between Harrisburg and Pittsburgh and today there is only one.

The municipal membership of CONNECT believes that passenger rail provides a financially accessible and environmentally friendly transportation option. According to CONNECT municipal leaders, an increase in Amtrak service in Pittsburgh will expand transportation access to a broader range of citizens and will encourage people to visit the world class attractions found in Allegheny County's urban core. A relatively modest investment from the Commonwealth could provide significant benefits to the region.

The report, *On Track to Accessibility*, conservatively estimates that adding two trains will increase annual ridership by 195,000 people, a return well worth the investment. We urge you to take the first step and request additional service from Amtrak for the Pennsylvanian. We thank you for your attention and consideration on this important transportation issue for urban core of Allegheny County. Please contact us if you have any questions or comments about this issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kathy Coder".

Kathy Coder  
President

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Kathy Risko".

Kathy Risko  
Executive Director

cc. Governor Tom Corbett; Senator Jay Costa; Representative Frank Dermody

