

Chairman Roegner, Vice-Chairman Lipps, and Ranking Member Leland,

The Trump administration, in its early days, revealed its plans to eliminate passenger rail transportation in Ohio. That danger seems to have passed, for the time being.

Over the course of the last century, our predecessors built one of the most effective and comprehensive infrastructure systems the world. Firms from all over the world now had unprecedented access to the innovations and industrial power of great American cities like Cleveland and Cincinnati. Within decades, we could transport people and products across the continent for a fraction of the cost and a fraction of the time required in other parts of the world.

What lies before us is an opportunity to bring Ohio's economy to the world stage. Two million potential consumers currently live in the Columbus Area and remains the third largest American city unserved by commercial passenger rail. Within that tremendous market lie thousands of brilliant and well-educated scientists, healthcare professionals, and business owners ready to share their talents with the world.

In the face of this history and this potential for progress, it seems we're falling behind. Our bridges are ready to collapse, our roads are spotted with unmended potholes, and our rail systems are outdated, few, and far between.

The president even campaigned on revitalizing our stagnant infrastructure, and yet somehow we find ourselves having to defend what little we have left. Any business owner will tell you that to see profits, you must first make an investment and then nurture it. Our nation's great investments must be cared for.

I stand before this committee asking your support for House Concurrent Resolution 12. Amtrak provides the cleanest, cheapest, and most efficient system of showcasing Ohio's talent on a national stage. Businesses and consumers stand to lose millions at the hands of irresponsible economic development policy, which makes it our responsibility as public servants to support Ohio's passenger rail.