



JOHN T. McDONALD III, RPh
Assemblymember 108th District

THE ASSEMBLY
STATE OF NEW YORK
ALBANY

CHAIR
Governmental Operations

COMMITTEES
Alcoholism and Drug Abuse
Higher Education
Health
Ways and Means

April 21, 2025

Mr. Anthony Coscia
Chair, Amtrak Board of Directors
1 Massachusetts Ave, NW
Washington, D.C. 20001

Dear Mr. Coscia:

We would like to extend our gratitude to Amtrak and the NYS Department of Transportation for changes and progress made on the railway system to date. Due to stakeholder feedback, we urge you to please consider the following to minimize negative impacts on riders from recent developments:

- Move the northbound Adirondack's additional layover to Saratoga Springs. This will ensure that passengers en route to Schenectady and Saratoga have shorter delays on their trips.
- Run the Adirondack and Maple Leaf as separate trains on Saturday and Sunday when Amtrak does not have high levels of New Jersey Transit commuter trains operating. This provides additional separate departure times needed to meet demand on the busy weekends.
- Run Albany to Poughkeepsie shuttle trains to connect with Metro North Railroad.
- Ask Metro North Railroad to allow Amtrak to push back the departure of the 4:30 PM train from Albany so as to reduce the three-hour service gap southbound. Metro North Railroad operates a number of non-revenue service trips southbound to Croton-Harmon and Grand Central Terminal at the end of the evening rush-hour for storage and later evening trips northbound, limiting slots for Amtrak.

We realize that this is a challenging time, but we believe that the implementation of our recommendations can offset the negative impacts from service reductions. The success of the Rensselaer train station over the generations is not one to be lost.

We would like to add that we are aware of an issue that resulted in the removal of a set of Horizon series cars from service. We understand that as a result New York lost the cars that were going to lengthen the Maple Leaf and one trainset in the Hudson Valley after April 28th. We hope that equipment shifts are leveraged to address this problem as ridership continues to grow.

Thank you for your consideration and please feel free to reach out to my office with any questions.

Sincerely,

Hon. John T. McDonald III, RPh
Member of NYS Assembly, 108th District

Hon. Jake Ashby
NYS Senator 43rd District



Hon. Gabriella Romero
Member of NYS Assembly, 109th District



Hon. Patricia Fahy
NYS Senator, 46th District



Hon. Michelle Hinchey
NYS Senator 41st District

cc: U.S. Senator and Minority Leader Charles Schumer
U.S. Senator Kirsten Gillibrand
U.S. Congressman Paul Tonko
New York State Governor Kathy Hochul