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Congress of the United States
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND
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SUBCOMMITTEE ON AVIATION,
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SUBCOMMITTEE ON WATER RESOURCES
AND ENVIRONMENT
COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY
SUBCOMMITTEE ON COUNTERTERRORISM
AND INTELLIGENCE

June 2, 2026

Mr. Roger Harris
President
AMTRAK
1 Massachusetts Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20001

Dear Mr. Harris:

With less than two weeks until the first FIFA World Cup match in the United States, our transportation system must be prepared for the surge of visitors expected to arrive in the region. Given the demands this event will place on rail service, I write to request assurances that Amtrak's Northeast Corridor is ready to reliably transport workers, volunteers, and spectators to and from World Cup matches.

New Jersey's Ninth Congressional District is home to MetLife Stadium, which will host eight FIFA World Cup matches, including the championship final. New Jersey expects between one and three million visitors during the tournament, many of whom will rely on Amtrak's Northeast Corridor to travel through Secaucus Junction Station.¹ While approximately 60 percent of NJ Transit's daily trains and 80 percent of its passenger rail trips operate on the Northeast Corridor, NJ Transit does not own or maintain the rail infrastructure. As a result, the reliability of service depends heavily on Amtrak's ability to maintain and operate the corridor. Although significant preparations have been made ahead of the tournament, recent service disruptions between New York and New Jersey have raised concerns about the ability to move people to matches on time.

On May 5, New Jersey Transit passengers experienced nearly thirty-minute delays caused by an Amtrak track issue in the Hudson River Tunnel.² Ten days later, on May 14, a fire in an East River Tunnel used by NJ Transit and LIRR trains caused additional delays of up to forty minutes.³ The resulting disruptions and repair work continued into the following day, forcing service diversions, reduced operations, and ongoing delays between New York and New Jersey. Had incidents of this magnitude occurred on World Cup match days, many ticketholders could have

¹ New Jersey Transit, *Getting to NYNJ Stadium*, www.njtworldcup.com/getting-to-nynj-stadium/ (last accessed May 27, 2026) (noting that "trains on the Northeast Corridor and North Jersey Coast Lines stop at Secaucus Junction, where customers can connect to stadium-bound service").

² Adeja Shivonne, *NJ Transit Riders Face Delays During Tuesday Commute*, FOX 5 News (May 5, 2026), www.fox5ny.com/news/nj-transit-riders-face-delays-during-tuesday-commute.

³ Stephen Nessen & Ramsey Khalifeh, *Chaos at Penn Station as Fire Breaks Out, Upending LIRR and NJ Transit Service*, Gothamist (May 14, 2026), www.gothamist.com/news/fire-breaks-out-at-penn-station-upending-lirr-and-nj-transit-service.

missed significant portions of matches despite paying hundreds, and in some cases thousands, of dollars for admission.⁴

These concerns were further heightened on May 29, when a fire involving contractor equipment near the North River Tunnel suspended rail service between New Jersey and New York for nearly twelve hours and injured at least five people.⁵ According to public reports, the incident damaged catenary, signaling, and track infrastructure, disrupted service throughout the Northeast Corridor, and required extensive emergency repairs before operations could resume.⁶ Reports of delayed and incomplete public communications during the incident were equally disturbing, leaving many passengers uncertain about the cause of the disruption and how long service would be affected.⁷ While investigations remain ongoing, the incident highlights both the operational and communications challenges that can accompany major service disruptions. As the region prepares to host the World Cup and other major international events, the public must have confidence not only in the reliability of the transportation system but also in transportation providers' ability to deliver timely, accurate, and transparent information when disruptions occur.

In addition to the strain that increased ridership may place on the network, I am concerned about the impact of extreme heat on rail operations during the tournament. Just last week, a brush fire near the Hudson River Tunnel forced the suspension of Amtrak and NJ Transit service into and out of Penn Station.⁸ Extreme heat has also historically caused delays and service disruptions throughout the Northeast Corridor. NJ Transit's Chief Executive Officer has previously stated that temperatures beneath Newark Penn Station can reach 128 degrees Fahrenheit, conditions that can damage railcar cooling systems and cause rails to expand and deform.⁹ Similar challenges emerged last summer, when extreme heat contributed to significant Amtrak delays between Washington, Newark, and New York.¹⁰

As millions of visitors travel to the United States for the World Cup, it is essential that Amtrak and federal, state, and local partners ensure reliable transportation throughout the region. To better understand Amtrak's preparedness for the tournament and its ability to respond to service disruptions, I am requesting answers to the following questions no later than **June 9, 2026**.

⁴ See Rachel Bachman, *The World Cup First-Round Game That Costs More Than a Ticket to the Super Bowl*, Wall. St. J. (May 8, 2026), www.wsj.com/sports/soccer/colombia-portugal-world-cup-6c1f318b?mod=Searchresults&pos=3&page=1 (noting "cheapest resale tickets for that [first round] game were averaging about \$2,500, according to TicketData, which tracks activity across resale sites").

⁵ Stefanos Chen, *Maintenance Train Fire at Penn Station Injures 5 and Disrupts Rail Service*, N.Y. Times (May 29, 2026), www.nytimes.com/live/2026/05/29/nyregion/penn-station-fire-amtrak-nyc.

⁶ Colleen Wilson & Manahil Ahmad, *Service Resumes with Delays at NY Penn Station Following Fire*, North Jersey (May 29, 2026), www.northjersey.com/story/news/transportation/2026/05/29/amtrak-train-fire-hudson-river-tunnel-nj-transit/90310577007/.

⁷ *Id.*

⁸ Allem Devlin, *NJ Transit Service Resumes at Penn Station New York After Brush Fire Caused Suspension*, CBS News (May 20, 2026), www.cbsnews.com/newyork/news/nj-transit-tracks-secaucus-brush-fire.

⁹ Chris Keating, *Extreme Heat Takes Toll on NJ Transit Rail Service*, News 12 New Jersey (June 26, 2026), <http://www.newjersey.news12.com/extreme-heat-takes-toll-on-nj-transit-rail-service>.

¹⁰ Odyssey Fields, *Amtrak Trains Delayed Due to Speed Restrictions as Heat Wave Hits Region*, DC News Now (June 23, 2026), www.dcnewsnow.com/news/local-news/washington-dc/amtrak-trains-delayed-due-to-speed-restrictions-as-heat-wave-hits-region/.

- i) Has Amtrak addressed the infrastructure issues that led to service delays and diversions on May 5, 14, and 15?
 - a. If no, please provide a list of outstanding repairs and maintenance.
- ii) Has Amtrak coordinated with NJ Transit, the Metropolitan Transportation Authority, and the New York Department of Transportation regarding rail vulnerabilities that could affect transportation to and from World Cup matches, including infrastructure damage, deferred maintenance concerns, and extreme weather conditions?
 - a. If no, will Amtrak commit to providing transit partners with information?
- iii) Does Amtrak have contingency plans with NJ Transit, the Metropolitan Transportation Authority, and the New York Department of Transportation to ensure that passengers affected by rail delays, equipment failures, infrastructure issues, or extreme weather can access alternative transportation and still attend World Cup matches?
 - a. If yes, please provide a copy of the plans.
 - b. If no, will Amtrak commit to working with regional transit partners in creating such plans?
- iv) In light of the May 29, 2026 service suspension caused by a contractor-related fire near the North River Tunnel, what additional measures is Amtrak implementing before and during the World Cup to reduce the risk of infrastructure, maintenance, contractor, or equipment-related incidents affecting service into and out of New York Penn Station?
 - a. Please identify any operational changes, enhanced inspection protocols, contractor oversight measures, emergency response procedures, or infrastructure protections that will be in place during the tournament.
- v) Has Amtrak conducted a World Cup readiness assessment of New York Penn Station, the North River Tunnels, and the Northeast Corridor infrastructure serving MetLife Stadium?
 - a. If yes, please provide a summary of the assessment and its findings.
 - b. If no, will Amtrak commit to establishing a readiness assessment before FIFA World Cup matches?
- vi) Has Amtrak established communications protocols to ensure timely, accurate, and consistent information is provided during service disruptions occurring before or during the World Cup, including coordinated customer communications procedures, incident notification protocols, and information-sharing agreements with NJ Transit, the Metropolitan Transportation Authority, and other regional transportation partners?
 - a. If yes, please provide copies of those protocols, procedures, and agreements.
 - b. If no, will Amtrak commit to establishing such protocols before FIFA World Cup matches?

* * * * *

Thank you for your attention to this matter, and I look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Nellie Pou". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the left and then curves under the name.

Nellie Pou

Member of Congress

cc:

The Honorable Sean Duffy
Secretary
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Mr. Anthony R. Coscia
Chairman
National Railroad Passenger Corporation
1 Massachusetts Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20001