



May 23, 2019

The Honorable Richard Shelby
Chairman
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Patrick Leahy
Vice Chairman
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Roy Blunt
Chairman, Labor HHS & Education
Subcommittee
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Patty Murray
Ranking Member, Labor HHS &
Education Subcommittee
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Shelby, Vice Chairman Leahy, Chairman Blunt, and Ranking Member Murray:

On behalf of the OneRail Coalition, I am writing to urge you to support the Railroad Retirement Board (RRB)'s request for \$137,216,000 million in the FY20 Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies appropriations bill.

A portion of these funds would be dedicated to continuing the modernization and upgrading of the RRB's current 40-year-old legacy mainframe system to bring service to beneficiaries up to basic modern standards and to provide adequate staff levels to prevent further reductions in service and reduced office hours.

Once the IT modernization is fully implemented, the Board will save money and staff. In the meantime, with significant numbers of retirements and a stagnant administrative budget, the agency requires additional staff to handle lengthy manual processes and to avoid office closures which would further delay the dispensing of benefits. Currently staffed at about 800 full time equivalents (FTEs), the RRB needs a minimum of 850 employees to ensure that benefit programs are administered in an optimal fashion as it upgrades its IT systems.

Since approval of additional funding only requires the authority to use funds from the Board's own trusts rather than additional general tax revenue funds, OneRail believes the Railroad Retirement Board (RRB) deserves strong consideration for a relatively modest increase to serve our nation's railroad workers.

The OneRail Coalition appreciates your consideration of our views on this matter.

Sincerely,

Anne P. Canby, Director
OneRail Coalition