

# United States Senate

December 20, 2019

Mr. Richard Anderson  
President and CEO  
National Passenger Railroad Corporation  
60 Massachusetts Avenue NE  
Washington, DC 20002

I am reaching out today to highlight the importance of in-person ticket agents in Amtrak stations in rural Montana communities. I secured a provision in the Fiscal Year 2020 Appropriations bill that addresses Montanans' concerns regarding ticket agents at Amtrak stations. I respectfully request that you now work to immediately reinstate ticket agents in the Havre and Shelby stations.

Passenger rail service is a critical component of Montana's Hi-Line transportation system. In 2018, Amtrak unilaterally eliminated ticket agents at the Havre and Shelby stations, forcing passengers to rely solely on online transactions. Eliminating these positions does not take into account the vital role these folks play in their communities.

Ticket agents' chief responsibility is to provide passengers with accurate schedule information and cost-effective ticket pricing, but they also serve folks in ways that automated systems cannot. Ticket agents promote local tourism, and are able to help secure medical care for passengers who might need it. Since the Havre and Shelby ticket positions were eliminated, locals have struggled to put their children on trains because minors are unable to ride Amtrak without a ticket agent present. Having an Amtrak-trained official on the platform is an invaluable resource, and should not be replaced by a machine.

That's why I am pleased that Congress passed the *Further Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2020*, which includes language requiring Amtrak to reinstate any ticket agent positions eliminated in Fiscal Year 2018. This language encompasses both the Havre and Shelby stations. These communities look forward to returning to a high standard of customer service.

I appreciate your time and diligence to this matter. We share an interest in maintain quality Amtrak service to rural America, and I look forward to working with you to reinstate ticket agents in Montana.

Sincerely,



Jon Tester