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**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
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Received & Inspected

JUN 19 2015

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June 15, 2015

Honorable Tom Wheeler  
Chairman  
Federal Communications Commission  
445 12<sup>th</sup> Street SW  
Washington, DC 20554

Dear Mr. Wheeler:

I respectfully request that you improve the Amtrak Police Department's capacity to keep Amtrak riders safe by granting the Amtrak Police access to public safety frequencies. This would enable Amtrak police to effectively communicate and share data with other law enforcement agencies when needed, especially in times of crisis. This would have been especially helpful during the tragic Amtrak train number 188 derailment at Frankford Junction in my district in Philadelphia just a few weeks ago, where eight people were killed and over 200 injured.

The Amtrak Police Department operates on an antiquated radio frequency spectrum that prevents Amtrak police officers nationwide from communicating with local, state, and federal law enforcement agencies. As such, Amtrak police patrol radios operate on a different radio frequency from the Philadelphia police and Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority (SEPTA) police. Since Amtrak has only one radio they can use to speak with Philadelphia police, they were not able to keep abreast of the 911 calls when the train crashed. Over a decade ago, incompatibility of radio systems were blamed for some of the confusion among first responders to the World Trade Center tragedy. Since then, interoperability, or the ability of agencies to talk and exchange information in real time, has been identified as a high priority in public safety and remains that way today.

The Amtrak Police Department is on the frontlines of the fight to ensure the safety of nearly 2 million riders annually and the millions of residents who live in the cities along the Amtrak corridor. "Operation RAILS SAFE" is a coordinated effort between the Amtrak Police Department, the New York City Police Department, and the Transportation Security Administration that provides heightened station and right of way patrols, increased security presence onboard trains, explosive detection canine sweeps, random passenger bag inspections, and counter-surveillance. The success of this program further demonstrates the necessity of interoperability between Amtrak and various law enforcement agencies.

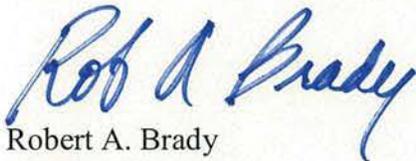
Another example of the importance of optimizing transportation security again affects my constituents because it will occur in Philadelphia. Pope Francis and the World Meeting of

Families will meet in the City September of this year and the event is expected to attract two million visitors to the City. Additionally, Philadelphia will host the 2016 Democratic National Convention during July of 2016, which will significantly increase congestion, movement, and the need for safe transportation. It is imperative that Philadelphia and other cities around the country are able to communicate and respond adequately in the event of an emergency.

By granting the Amtrak Police Department access to public safety frequencies, we ensure better public safety. First responders of all kinds need access to effective, reliable wireless communications with other public safety agencies when responding to dangerous situations on our railways. To this end, public safety radio communications and interoperability are critical to the safety and well-being of our officers and the public.

I urge the Commission to amend Title 47 of the Code of Federal Regulations in sections 90.20, 90.617, and 90.523 to allow Amtrak Police the necessary authority to license and operate on 700, 800, or 900 MHz interoperability frequencies.

Sincerely,



Robert A. Brady  
Member of Congress



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION  
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF  
THE CHAIRMAN

July 23, 2015

The Honorable Robert A. Brady  
U. S. House of Representatives  
102 Cannon House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Brady:

Thank you for your letter requesting that the Commission grant the Amtrak Police Department access to public safety frequencies. I wholeheartedly agree that efficient and effective communication during emergencies is critical. Your views on this issue are very important to us.

In that regard, I recently circulated a draft Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM) to my fellow Commissioners that addresses the issue you raise. The draft NPRM builds on a petition for rulemaking filed by the National Public Safety Telecommunications Council (NPSTC), which urges the Commission to permit railroad police, including Amtrak police, to use interoperability and mutual aid channels in several public safety spectrum bands for the purpose of communicating with state and local law enforcement officials in railroad-related emergencies.

I appreciate your interest and will be happy to keep your office updated on additional action that the Commission may take in this matter. Please let me know if I can be of any further assistance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Tom Wheeler".

Tom Wheeler