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Jenny Hansell

April 14, 2016

Honorable Anthony Foxx, Secretary of Transportation  
U.S Department of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Avenue SE  
Washington DC, 20590

Dear Secretary Foxx:

I am writing in support of the Dutchess County and Harlem Valley Rail Trail Association's (HVRTA) application to complete the eight-mile trail connection between the Village of Millerton and Under Mountain Road in the Town of Ancram; the tunnel crossing of State Route 22 at the intersection of State Route 22 and Orphan Farm Rd. (Copake Falls); and three pedestrian bridges to connect to the trail at Black Grocery Rd. in Copake. These three components will finish approximately 28 miles of trail from Wassaic (Dutchess County) to Hillsdale (Columbia County), linking to New York City via Metro North Railroad. Upon completion the entire trail will be 46 miles in length.

This project will join two counties, NY State Parks, and a not for profit in a project which will become a destination for thousands of people from near and afar. The Harlem Valley Rail trail is a tremendous asset to our community and to our organization, the North East Community Center, which serves the northeastern region of Dutchess County. Our building is situated along the Trail, and the Millerton Farmers Market, which we run, is at Railroad Plaza, which will be part of the new trail connection. The influx of visitors and tourists, the opportunities for recreation and exercise for people of all ages, and the beauty and peacefulness of the trail are all enormous benefits, and make our towns unique and attractive to businesses and people looking for where to buy a home and raise a family (or spend their retirement years.)

I am hopeful that the you and the review committee will consider a grant for the Harlem Valley Rail Trail Association to aid in improving this important connection in eastern Dutchess and Columbia Counties.

Yours truly,

Jenny Hansell  
Executive Director