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Governor Laura Kelly  
Capitol, 300 SW 10th Ave., Ste. 241S  
Topeka, KS 66612-1590

May 23, 2023

RE: Heartland Flyer Extension

Governor Kelly:

The Downtown Council of Kansas City, Missouri (DTC), the primary advocate organization for Downtown. We would like to express our organizations strong support for Block Real Estate Services, LLC and Sunflower Development Group, LLC. and HOK Architects.

Downtown Kansas City is undergoing a renaissance. No other time in history has our Downtown experienced such significant redevelopment. With impressive new neighborhood amenities – from the HOK designed Power & Light District and the Creative Crossroads Arts District to the City Market and our riverfront – \$9.5 billion in investment has positioned Downtown as a thriving neighborhood for those choosing the urban lifestyle.

We applaud Kansas and Oklahoma for working together to seek Corridor Identification for an extended route from Oklahoma City, OK to Newton, KS. However, we understand there has been a pause in the completion of the Service Development Plan. This pause gives us an opportunity to take fuller advantage of federal funds currently available, which could **double the economic impact and tax revenue generation** for both rural and states by improving that service.

As originally proposed the current Heartland Flyer would be extended from Oklahoma City to Newton, Kansas establishing a seamless connection between the Amtrak Texas Eagle and Southwest Chief trains that serve Fort Worth, Texas, Newton, Kansas, and Kansas City, Missouri.

We support a **second frequency** that would begin in Fort Worth in the morning and travel northward to Newton, KS arriving between 4 and 5 pm.

A **second frequency** on the full Heartland Flyer and its northward Extension would do the following:

- 1) According to the Service Development Plan of 2011, a second frequency would double ridership, sending several hundred thousand riders north on the Southwest Chief to Downtown Kansas City where our new streetcar system will take them to points north all the way to the River Market or soon south to the Plaza area and UMKC. Clearly, this would be an economic boon to Kansas City, MO..
- 2) This second frequency would further Amtrak's stated goal of a second frequency on the Heartland Flyer as identified in the Amtrak ConnectsUS 2035 Vision Statement from 2021.
- 3) A second frequency on the Heartland Flyer and its full Extension north will benefit the region, including increasing ridership on the Missouri River Runner, the Texas

## Downtown Council

1000 Walnut Street, Suite 200, Kansas City, MO 64106

Phone: 816.421.1520 website: www.downtownkc.org

Eagle and the Southwest Chief bringing both economic growth and improved service.

This vital **second connection** is essential for improving Amtrak service in the Heartland of the United States for a burgeoning mega-region that includes Missouri, Kansas, Oklahoma and Texas. We ask that the Extension north be increased to **two frequencies**.

Sincerely,



William Dietrich  
President & CEO  
Downtown Council  
of Kansas City Missouri

Cc: Governor of Oklahoma  
Governor of Texas  
Federal Railroad Administration  
Pete Buttigie, USDOT  
John Fairfield, Attorney, Fairfield Law Office  
KS Department of Transportation  
OK Department of Transportation  
TX Department of Transportation

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