



January 23, 2017

Ms. Rebecca Reyes-Alicea  
Program Manager  
Federal Railroad Administration  
One Bowling Green, Suite 249  
New York, NY 10004

Subject: NEC Future Tier 1 Environmental Impact Statement

Dear Ms. Reyes-Alicea,

On behalf of the City Center District of New London, CT, I would like to take the opportunity to submit feedback in opposition to the proposed Old Saybrook to Kenyon high-speed bypass.

City Center District is a tax district that represents over 160 property owners in downtown New London, CT. Our district includes New London Union Station, which has served as New London's railroad station since 1887.

We oppose the bypass for two primary reasons:

**1. The bypass will erode our tax base by taking property off the tax rolls and reducing the value of adjacent property.**

As a city of approximately 5.5 square miles, New London has a limited tax base. This tax base is further constrained because nearly 50% of the land within the city is exempt from property taxes. The proposed bypass will remove more property from the tax rolls, creating an even greater burden on our residents, businesses, and property owners.

**2. The bypass will relocate high-speed rail service away from our intermodal transportation hub.**

New London Union Station is located in the heart of our district. It represents one piece of an intermodal transportation hub that includes commuter, regional, and intercity rail service; local and intercity bus service; local and interstate ferry services. Removing one piece from this hub not only reduces the efficiency of our regional transportation network, but also reduces the customer base for our district's businesses. Any loss in their customer base represents a real threat to their solvency.

While we support efforts to improve the efficiency of rail travel, we oppose any actions that will erode our local tax base and reduce our businesses' customer base. We respectfully request that the FRA strongly consider our concerns when developing the Selective Alternative, and urge you to remove the bypass from consideration prior to the Record of Decision.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "TH", written over a horizontal line.

Tim Hanser  
Board Member and Transportation Liaison  
City Center District