

James E. Risch
United States Senator
483 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510



Russ Fulcher
Member of Congress
1520 Longworth House Office Bldg.
Washington, D.C. 20515

May 17, 2019

Mr. Lance M. Fritz
Chief Executive Officer
Union Pacific Railroad
1400 Douglas Street
Omaha, NE 68179

Dear Mr. Fritz:

We write to express our strong support for the proposed acquisition by Shoshone County, Idaho, of the abandoned Union Pacific rail line in Wallace, Idaho for the future site of a county jail.

Shoshone County is located in northern Idaho, and includes the historic Silver Valley, one of the richest silver and lead mining districts in the world. However, the region has fallen on difficult times, and Shoshone County's leadership has always done their best to live within their budgets. After reviewing the situation, we agree with the county sheriff and commissioners that the current jail is well beyond its service life and must be replaced. The current jail can only be described as decrepit, with leaking pipes everywhere, exposed wiring (sometimes in close proximity to leaks), and an outdated design. All of these factors and more put the inmates and county employees in danger.

Because Shoshone County is very mountainous, flat, buildable lots suitable for a jail are not in abundant supply. In addition, Idaho law mandates that certain county facilities, such as the jail, must be built within the city limits of the county seat (Wallace), further limiting the county's options.

The commissioners told us the county has made a significant offer to Union Pacific to purchase the property, and we know Union Pacific strongly supports community redevelopment and public safety. It just makes good sense for the county and Union Pacific to reach a deal to acquire this property for the benefit of all in the community.

If there is anything we can do to further this effort, please contact Senator Risch's Regional Director, Sid Smith, at 208-667-6130, or Congressman Fulcher's Regional Director, Tim Kastning, at (208) 667-0127.

Sincerely,


JAMES E. RISCH
United States Senator


RUSS FULCHER
Member of Congress