

To Whom It May Concern:

As an artist and environmentalist I endorse the efforts of the Coalition for Algoma Passenger Trains (CAPT) to preserve and enhance the Algoma Passenger Trains.

As an artist I consider the geographical area through which the train travels as a Canadian art history heritage area. The train is the way that Group of Seven painters traveled into the Canadian wilderness and creatively displayed those landscapes through their art. Their paintings of scenes along the Algoma Central Railway have become Canadian cultural icons.

As an environmentalist I support public investment in train-based tourism and train travel in general as it is a way to reduce pollution and climate change and their destructive effects on the planet. Enhancing the Northern Ontario wilderness trains as eco-tourism rail corridors is a way for Northern Ontario to diversify its economy in an environmentally respectful way. The Algoma Central Railway educates tourists about our fragile ecosystems as it travels through areas such as the world's largest game preserve—the Chapleau Game Preserve.

I support CAPT's requests to the Federal and Ontario governments to reverse the deterioration of this important passenger rail service by upgrading the equipment, returning to the former schedule of at least four return trips per week and treating this as essential infrastructure for the development of a rail tourism corridor through Ontario wilderness.

Sincerely

Robert Bateman