

Washington, DC – Congressman Earl Blumenauer issued the following statement today following the decision by Amtrak’s Board of Directors to fire David Gunn as their CEO and President. Mr. Gunn, who had served in this position for the last three years, has been widely credited by Republicans and Democrats alike for his leadership at the passenger rail line and for making strides in turning around the corporation’s financial woes.

“It is stunning that the Amtrak Board decided to relieve David Gunn of his duties as Amtrak President. Mr. Gunn has brought a degree of professionalism, candor, and confidence to the management of Amtrak that is unprecedented in the agency’s history.

“Amtrak has continually been hampered by Congress and administrations that have provided conflicting goals, mixed messages, and inadequate funding along with restrictions on operations. David Gunn came at a perilous time for Amtrak and turned it around, gaining the confidence of everybody he worked with and helping set the stage for Amtrak finally being able to reach the goals and expectations of the most important group - our constituents.

“The firing of Mr. Gunn is particularly surprising as it comes soon after a bipartisan group in Congress succeeded in standing up to Amtrak opponents and providing funding for the agency in next year’s transportation appropriations bill. This is a blow that will have detrimental effects for years to come; it is unprecedented, unnecessary, and will have serious negative consequences. We can only hope that the administration and Board of Directors come to their senses and retain the services of this outstanding public service with proven competence.”