

The Honourable Diane Lebouthillier,
MP for the Gaspé Peninsula and Magdalen Islands
56, Boul. René-Lévesque Ouest
Chandler (Québec)
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Mrs Lebouthillier

We urge your government to act immediately, in collaboration with VIA Rail, to establish a plan for the rapid and progressive resumption of passenger train service in the Gaspé Peninsula. Currently, the railroad is fully repaired and safe for passenger trains between Matapédia, New Richmond and Caplan.

We propose the following steps for service recovery:

- New Richmond or Caplan: now (August 2021) – the tracks are ready and safe;
- New Carlisle: Fall 2022;
- Chandler: as soon as the tracks are available and safe;
- Percé: as soon as the tracks are available and safe;
- Gaspé: summer of 2025 or before.

Last May, VIA Rail declared that the service would resume when the tracks were fully repaired and safe through to Gaspé, that is to say in 2025, an unacceptable, even insulting statement. Gaspésians need the train¹ to travel and the resumption of rail service in Gaspé would contribute to the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions. The federal government pays a considerable amount of money to finance VIA Rail. As taxpayers, we do not accept to pay more and be deprived of services.

We need your strong support to ensure that VIA Rail resumes service on the Gaspé coast as soon as possible. In particular, we ask you, as a representative of the Gaspé population, to organize a meeting with your colleague, Mr. Omar Alghabra, Federal Minister of Transport, in order to find solutions and plan actions for the rapid and progressive restoration of the service. Once this action plan is established, we ask you to transmit it to the senior authorities of VIA Rail who seem unable to find practical and fast solutions.

We ask that you publicly declare your support for the return of the passenger train to the Gaspé and that you quickly make known the actions you intend to take to bring about this return. We look forward to hearing from you.

Please accept, Mrs. Lebouthillier, my best regards.

Signature, name, address

Date

You can write your personal comments on the back of this letter

¹ Gaspésians need their passenger train: <https://www.gaspetrain.org/whythetrain/>