



SENATOR AARON BEAN
President Pro Tempore
4th District

THE FLORIDA SENATE

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February 9, 2022
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February 9, 2022

By E-Filing

Cynthia T. Brown
Chief of the Section of Administration
Office of Proceedings
Surface Transportation Board
395 E Street SW
Washington, D.C. 20423

Re: Gulf Coast Passenger Service between New Orleans and Mobile
STB Finance Docket No. 36496

Dear Surface Transportation Board Members:

I am writing to express my concern about impacts on freight rail service and local communities from Amtrak's proposed Gulf Coast passenger service, not only between New Orleans, Louisiana, and Mobile, Alabama, but across the entire U.S. rail network and in my Florida district.

Many of CSX's Florida employees reside in my district, which encompasses Nassau County and part of Duval County in suburban Jacksonville, Florida, near the company's headquarters. CSX plays a significant role in our region, state, and national economies through the supply chain. CSX currently connects to 23 states and more than 70 coastal and inland ports that serve more than two thirds of the U.S. consumption market.

In recent months, we have all witnessed the significant impact that issues with the supply chain can create on our individual localities and the goods we rely on for our daily lives. Recent supply chain challenges have stressed businesses both in my district and throughout the state of Florida. CSX is a vital cog in the supply chain for the state, moving goods both into and out of Florida through my district. It is vital, as CSX and other railroads come out of the pandemic that expansion of passenger rail service not be done at the expense of our country's world-leading freight transportation system.

REPLY TO:

☐ Duval Station, 13453 North Main Street, Suite 301, Jacksonville, Florida 32218 (904) 757-5039 FAX: (888) 263-1578
☐ 404 Senate Building, 404 South Monroe Street, Tallahassee, Florida 32399-1100 (850) 487-5004 FAX: (850) 410-4805

Senate's Website: www.flsenate.gov

WILTON SIMPSON
President of the Senate

AARON BEAN
President Pro Tempore

February 9, 2022

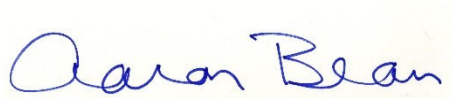
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CSX and Norfolk Southern have submitted a detailed study that shows significant harm to Gulf Coast freight service if passenger service is introduced without infrastructure improvements. Freight train delays and reductions in speed between New Orleans and Mobile will certainly be felt in nearby Florida. Amtrak has not responded with anything similarly detailed and robust. Moreover, Amtrak's latest filings would have the Board move away from transportation planning best practices—a simulation study based on real-world railroading and 20-year forecasting. Yet these best practices are the best way to analyze the true impact of new passenger service on existing freight service. I am certain the Board will not abandon this tested approach and will thoroughly evaluate the CSX and Norfolk Southern evidence and proposed projects to mitigate harm from Amtrak's passenger service.

It is my hope that Amtrak will pay its fair share. If Amtrak is permitted to commence passenger service without paying its own way, the cost of that service will inevitably fall on the shoulders of shippers, and ultimately, to the rest of us as consumers of goods shipped via our national transportation network. **I ask the board to require Amtrak to fund and facilitate the construction of infrastructure projects so as to avoid any harm to freight rail service.**

Thank you for giving attention to this rail line.

Sincerely,



Aaron Bean
State Senator | 4th District

cc: FD 36496 Service List