



December 12, 2014

Mr. Dave Navecky
Surface Transportation Board
Attn: Environmental Filing - Docket No. FD 35852
395 E Street SW
Washington, D. C. 20423-0001

RE: Support for EIS process and Port Canaveral's Plans for Rail Extension

Dear Mr. Navecky:

On behalf of the board of directors for the North Brevard Economic Development Zone (NBEDZ), please accept this letter in support of the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) review process currently being undertaken by your agency, in an attempt to gauge the feasibility and consequences of Port Canaveral's plans to construct and operate approximately 11 miles of new railway lines extending from an existing Florida East Coast Railway line to port facilities in Cape Canaveral, Florida. It is our understanding that the port's proposal would also utilize approximately 17 miles of existing rail within NASA's Kennedy Space Center complex.

Although our area has been closely associated economically with the aerospace industry, the growth and promise of business activity at Port Canaveral offers the real possibility of further diversifying our local economy and protecting it against dependency upon one major industry sector. Our NBEDZ board recognizes this fact, and supports all efforts to fully evaluate the port's plans to use rail to further enhance its role in cargo distribution, provided that such an evaluation is conducted with the input and collaboration from environmental and community stakeholders. The board also supports the full utilization of the existing railway infrastructure at NASA's Kennedy Space Center – along with other infrastructure and assets at the space complex – as a means of promoting greater economic growth.

While the local economy has improved in recent years, our board believes that the best way to maintain this economic momentum is by encouraging entities like Port Canaveral to pursue new avenues for growth. Commercial cargo represents one such opportunity, and we trust that the economic benefits of this opportunity will be fully examined and considered through the EIS process. [To assist in this task, a copy of our 2014 Economic Assessment report on the northern part of Brevard County is attached.]

Should you have any questions, please contact Mr. Troy Post of our staff, at 321-264-6750.

Sincerely,

George Mikitarian

George Mikitarian,
Chairman