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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 Ms. Brown:

OmniTRAX, Inc., on behalf of itself and its affiliated short line railroads (collectively, "OmniTRAX"), provides this letter in support of CSX Transportation, Inc.'s ("CSXT") challenge to Amtrak's attempt at circumventing proper Surface Transportation Board ("STB") procedures in requesting the right to run passenger traffic on the New Orleans to Mobile route currently operated by CSXT and Norfolk Southern.

OmniTRAX fully supports an increase in passenger rail travel throughout the United States, recognizing the efficiencies and environmental benefits it brings. Our concern with the current Amtrak application before the STB is that it fails to take into consideration the impact of Amtrak's proposed service on current freight movement and does not acknowledge the needed capital improvements necessary to provide for such service.

If Amtrak is permitted to commence passenger service without making appropriate capital contributions, it will impose an economic hardship on freight railroad providers. It is also likely to cause delays in servicing our customers given that bottlenecks are likely to occur. This precedent would be especially harmful if applied to proposed Amtrak service on short line railroads and would lead to an increase in freight rates, as well as the previously mentioned delays, for customers and the potential failure of smaller short line railroads.

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Accordingly, OmniTRAX requests that the Board require Amtrak to provide appropriate impact studies, and, if applicable, facilitate and fund the construction of infrastructure so required in order to avoid any harm to freight rail service.

Respectfully submitted,
OmniTRAX, Inc.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Dean Piacente", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Dean Piacente
Chief Executive Officer

cc: FD 36496 Service List