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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:

On behalf of the Georgia Transportation Alliance (GTA), I am writing today to express our concerns regarding the impact that Amtrak's proposed Gulf Coast passenger service between New Orleans, Louisiana and Mobile, Alabama could have on freight rail service and, ultimately, on businesses in Florida that rely on that service.

GTA is Georgia's only organization focused solely on identifying and promoting long-term transportation solutions specifically connected to economic development and job creation. We are a statewide, multi-modal trade association that works closely with the Georgia Chamber of Commerce, the Georgia Department of Transportation and other key stakeholders in Georgia and Washington, DC, with the goal of ensuring an efficient and safe statewide multi-modal transportation system.

Many Georgia businesses rely heavily on the freight rail service provided by CSX Transportation, Inc. (CSXT) to not only receive supplies, but to also ship their products to destinations elsewhere in the country or the world. For this reason, freight rail service is critical to their success. Georgia is home to the fastest growing deep-water port in the United States and the fourth largest, making the need for reliable freight rail service even more acute.

As such, GTA is deeply concerned about the impact of Amtrak adding four passenger trains per day during peak hours over the largely single-track Gulf Coast Corridor that is burdened with multiple moveable bridges. We are especially concerned given the prospect that the passenger train service might commence without additional infrastructure to support it. It is our belief

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that without proper study and infrastructure improvements, freight rail service will be adversely impacted by this change. Recurring freight train delays and decreased train speeds are certain to create additional problems in the supply chain and further hamper businesses' ability to keep up with already high demand.

While we do not oppose Gulf Coast passenger service, we believe it is critical that the introduction of this new passenger service not decrease the quality of freight rail service over the heavily used Gulf Coast Corridor, which would adversely impact our state's manufacturing, agriculture, and small business industries. We believe that the addition of passenger service must be done with regard to the businesses that rely on the freight rail service operating on the same corridor. Otherwise, the burden of any decrease in the quality of freight rail service will inevitably fall on businesses that are already grappling with significant supply chain challenges.

It is for these reason that we ask the Board to protect the interests of those businesses who use the national rail network, and all of the employees they represent.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this critical issue.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "S. Millican".

Seth Millican, Executive Director
Georgia Transportation Alliance

CC: Reference Code FD 36496 Service List