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February 08, 2022

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

ENTERED
Office of Proceedings
February 11, 2022
Part of
Public Record

Dear Surface Transportation Board Members,

I am writing regarding Amtrak's proposed Gulf Coast passenger service between New Orleans, Louisiana, and Mobile, Alabama in collaborations with CSX and Norfolk Southern Rail Company.

CSX is headquartered in my Congressional District in Florida where a majority of its 3,000 Florida employees reside. CSX transports raw materials, finished goods, intermodal, and other commodities to facilities in the Gulf Coast as well as destinations around North America. They play a significant role in our region, state, and national economies through the supply chain as they currently connect to 23 states and more than 70 coastal and inland ports that serve more than two-thirds of the US consumer market. Numerous businesses rely on CSX to provide an efficient service to meet their business needs. CSX is also helping us reach climate goals as they are the first US freight railroad to average more than 533 miles per gallon per ton of freight moved.

I also support the service Amtrak provides to communities and was proud to vote in favor of the historic \$1.2 trillion Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act that will grow passenger rail in the United States. The Gulf Coast region is a critical transportation corridor and economic engine for the region. An expansion of passenger rail will expand regional public transportation and reduce damage to existing roadways while addressing congestion concerns. One way this can be achieved is to use standard industry practices, such as studies that model the needs of all users to optimize investments needed to reflect community needs, congestion mitigation, and environmental goals. I will remain committed to efforts to improve mobility options for all Americans which can improve people's quality of life and addresses climate change.

I understand that this decision will have broad implications on both freight and passenger rail and as the independent arbiter, I request that you use all available resources and research necessary to make a decision that is equitable and balances the interests of all stakeholders and Americans. I believe that Americans everywhere will benefit from a fair, timely, and transparent process to establish new train services. Do not hesitate to call my office at (202) 225-0123 if you have any additional questions.

Sincerely,



Al Lawson
Member of Congress