



February 3, 2022

By E-Filing

303660

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

ENTERED
Office of Proceedings
February 4, 2022
Part of
Public Record

Re: Surface Transportation Board Docket FD_36496 ID 301767
- National Railroad Passenger Corp Under 49 U.S.C.
Section 24308(e) - CSX Transportation, Inc., and Norfolk
Southern Corporation.

Dear Ms. Brown:

The Alabama Railway Association (ARA) is a non-profit association that was founded in 2003. We are a trade organization that represents all railroads in Alabama, from short lines to Class I railroads, along with many associate members that supply services and/or materials to support our operations. We are writing to urge the Surface Transportation Board to deny Amtrak's request to begin service on the freight rail corridor into Mobile without the addition of infrastructure to ensure freight fluidity.

Several of our members serve the public terminals at the Port of Mobile. Our industry has supported public / private investments at the Port's public terminals with the objective of generating capacity, attracting carrier services and growing Alabama's rail served freight markets. In turn, our regional businesses have been able to compete globally and create American jobs. Our member railroads also partner closely with the State of Alabama and local economic development agencies across the state and have been pivotal in attracting auto manufacturers, agricultural product producers, chemical producers and many other employers.

Congestion on freight lines in Mobile will have a ripple effect, impacting service across the state. Beyond the current proposal, ARA is very concerned about the precedent that allowing new passenger service on freight lines without infrastructure enhancements will set. Amtrak is looking at other potential passenger routes in Alabama and this continued approach stands to cripple economic development in our state, something ARA members take great pride in supporting.

As we stated in the letter ARA submitted to the STB last April, our association is not against passenger rail. But, we have deep reservations regarding Amtrak initiating new passenger rail service at Mobile without the proper investment to ensure freight and container intermodal rail service is not degraded, and ensuing there is sufficient capacity for continued freight growth. Moreover, we are concerned about resulting congestion and delays impacts to already strained supply chains.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Maeci Walker".

Maeci Walker
Executive Director, Alabama Railway Association

CC: Parties of Record