



302104

April 22, 2021

Ms. Allison Davis
Director, Office of Proceedings
Surface Transportation Board
395 E Street SW
Washington, DC 20423

ENTERED
Office of Proceedings
April 22, 2021
Part of
Public Record

Re: Gulf Coast Passenger Rail Services/STB Finance Docket No. 36496

Dear Ms. Davis:

The Mississippi State Port Authority ("MSPA") wishes to express its support of Amtrak using freight rail infrastructure for passenger service between New Orleans and Mobile. The intermediary stops in Bay Saint Louis, Gulfport, Biloxi and Pascagoula, will increase tourism and revenue, which will ultimately improve the local economy and help revitalize these communities, all of which were devastated by Hurricane Katrina in 2005.

The MSPA is an agency of the State of Mississippi that owns and operates a deep-water port located in Gulfport, Mississippi. The MSPA specializes in the importation and exportation of containerized, bulk, Ro-Ro, project and break-bulk cargo. In addition to its port operations, the MSPA serves as an economic development partner for the region. Improving the local economy and the quality of life of South Mississippians are important goals of the MSPA.

The MSPA does not foresee the return of passenger service having a negative impact on the movement of cargo in and out of the Port of Gulfport. In regard to Port of Gulfport operations, we believe that passenger and freight rail can coexist and hope the Surface Transportation Board will look favorably upon Amtrak's request.

Sincerely,

E.J. Roberts
President, Board of Commissioners

cc: Service List for Finance Docket No. 36496