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

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

Dear Ms. Davis,

I am writing to you to express Coastal Mississippi's support for the restoration of Gulf Coast passenger rail services between Mobile, AL and New Orleans, LA. Coastal Mississippi is an organization charged with promoting South Mississippi as a tourism and convention destination worldwide. Its mission centers on attracting ever-increasing numbers of leisure, convention, sports, and business visitors to the area. It is dedicated to maximizing the travel and tourism industry for South Mississippi, thus increasing the economic impact to our region.

The proposed passenger rail services would have an immense economic impact on not only our region but the entire state of Mississippi. A study released by the University of Southern Mississippi (USM) estimates the benefits of restoring Gulf Coast passenger rail services could generate a total economic output of up to \$485,924,479 in Mississippi. With proposed Amtrak service from New Orleans to Mobile on track to begin in 2022 with stops in Bay St. Louis, Gulfport, Biloxi and Pascagoula, Coastal Mississippi is estimated to see an annual tourism spending increase of up to \$37,520,300 in Hancock County, \$370,551,660 in Harrison County and \$33,415,460 in Jackson County.

Coastal Mississippi is very much looking forward to the re-introduction of a passenger rail service that would not only connect our 12 coastal communities, but further connect Coastal Mississippi with our neighboring destinations of Mobile and New Orleans. We are confident that the restoration of Gulf Coast passenger rail services will allow for increased visitation to all destinations along the route, thus boosting the region's economy, and directly aiding in the support and conservation of the qualities that make the Gulf Coast so unique.

Sincerely,



Milton Segarra, CDME
CEO

cc: For Service List for Finance Docket 36496