



ASSOCIATION FOR INNOVATIVE PASSENGER RAIL OPERATIONS

The Future of Passenger Rail

Ray B. Chambers - President

2703 Park Terrace Drive
Alexandria, Virginia 22307

February 4, 2022

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 Ms. Brown:

My name is Ray Chambers and I am President of the Association for Innovative Passenger Rail Operations-AIPRO. We are a rail labor and management organization. Our goal is nothing short of the creation of a new paradigm that will produce world-class intercity passenger service and a plethora of great jobs. Our private sector companies compete to provide our services through contracts with states and public authorities. The AIPRO companies run everything from streetcars to commuter trains, to intercity trains to high-speed rail. Taken together our company members are the leading operators of passenger rail trains in the United States.

I am filing this notice of my intent to participate in the February 15, 2022, Gulf Coast hearing before the Board on behalf of AIPRO. I request 10 minutes of speaking time. My testimony will cover the following key points:

1. We suggest a process for bringing competition and private sector operations to intercity routes. The process we propose is rooted in current federal statutes.
2. This process is now available for the Gulf Coast reactivation.

3. As a part of this process with the Infrastructure Investment & Jobs (IIJA) we propose the Surface Transportation Board, Federal Railroad Administration and USDOT incorporate the competitive option in reviewing regulations and processing grants.
4. Amtrak has recently been criticized by its Inspector General for its lack of accounting transparency. This results directly in hostile relations with state authorities and host railroads. The competitive process will provide “apples to apples” competition to Amtrak and improve Amtrak’s competitive performance as well as relationships with other passenger rail stakeholders.
5. A key element in the process is commercially negotiated agreements amongst all stakeholders based on the commuter model. The STB should encourage adaption of the commuter model. It may render unnecessary STB regulatory enforcement between the parties.
6. Such a competitive process will drive down Gulf Coast project costs, strengthen relations with host railroads and the Authority and improve passenger experience.

AIPRO companies have a large footprint and provide innovative experience on a global basis. Our testimony will propose a process that can lead the way to innovative and successful intercity passenger rail service.

I have provided my email address to the Board at Hearings@stb.gov.

Respectfully submitted,



Ray Chambers – President - AIPRO
ray.chambers@aiprorail.org