

February 27, 2025

309292

Via E-Filing

Mai T. Dinh
Director, Office of Proceedings
Surface Transportation Board
395 E Street S.W.
Washington, DC 20423-0001

ENTERED
Office of Proceedings
February 27, 2025
Part of
Public Record

Re: Docket No. EP 774 (Sub-No. 1) Notice of Passenger Rail Advisory Committee Vacancies

Please accept this notice as a self-nomination to the vacant seat on the Passenger Rail Advisory Committee. I am a licensed Professional Engineer, supporting high volume manufacturing - where fixed and incremental cost functions must be understood - reliant on both highway and railway freight logistics. Previously I worked for MDOT, coordinating mostly highway projects, such as I-269 from planning, design, and construction to FHWA acceptance. This work followed a period of designing buildings, sites, and utilities and a brief stint in railroad operations, yielding a perspective from both sides of the fence on customer needs and transportation infrastructure centered on true financial and resource efficiency.

I previously testified in 2022 in Finance Docket No. 36496, Application of the National Railroad Passenger Corp. Under 49 U.S.C. § 24308(e) – CSX Transportation, Inc. and Norfolk Southern Gulf Coast Passenger Service between New Orleans, LA and Mobile, AL. My comments then addressed the need to consider several questions related to the minimum fixed infrastructure needed to efficiently support domestic industry under Common Carrier railroad freight service obligations such that junction priority is even achievable for passenger operations, suggesting MLOS benchmarks set using numerical methods to form a discernable test and bring much needed clarity to the entire process. The questions being considered need input from engineers with varied backgrounds capable of seeing the larger surface transportation market. While I am not currently a state DOT employee, I am a resident of Mississippi, a state that provides funding for intercity passenger rail. I am willing to serve as a member of the PRAC and agree to serve in a representative capacity should a hardship reimbursement for travel expenses be provided.

/s/ Virgil G. Payne, PE

Lead Professional - Jackson

825 North President St., Jackson, MS 39202

(601) 524-9796

Virgil.payne@tbsmith.com