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**BUSINESS COUNCIL
OF ALABAMA**

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April 2, 2021

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

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. Davis:

The Business Council of Alabama is the state's largest business association representing nearly one million working Alabamians to ensure businesses of all sizes grow and flourish in our state. The Business Council of Alabama leadership is writing to urge the Surface Transportation Board to deny Amtrak an Order to restore passenger service between Mobile, Alabama and New Orleans, Louisiana, and compel Amtrak to complete its Rail Traffic Control Study with supplemental engineering and cost report.

Many of our member businesses rely on the CSX railroad to carry (ores, feedstocks, raw materials or finished products) to/from the public terminals at the Port of Mobile, or to interchange with other railroads to access our US based customers. In some cases, our freight continues through the port to reach our customers positioned along the CSX U.S. Gulf coast east/west mainline. Our industry has applauded and supported public / private investments at the port's public terminals with the single objective to generate capacity, attract carrier services and to grow our markets.



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Investments at the Port of Mobile have delivered new customers, retained or expanded our businesses, and attracted new industry, making Alabama's port one of the fastest growth ports in the nation. In turn, our regional businesses have been able to compete globally and create American jobs.

Our industry has deep reservations over Amtrak initiating new passenger rail service at Mobile without the proper study or investment to ensure freight and container intermodal rail service is not degraded, and to ensure there is sufficient capacity for continued freight growth. Moreover, our industry is concerned about resulting congestion or delay impacts to supply chains and transportation rates should passenger rail enter the corridor without proper assessment. In response to those concerns, our industry understood Amtrak initiated a freight modeling study and a supplemental engineering and cost assessment in early 2020. As the study was nearing completion in late January 2021, we learned that Amtrak cancelled the study. We also understood that the host railroads, the Alabama State Port Authority, the Alabama delegation to the Southern Rail Commission, and our elected officials asked Amtrak to complete the study work to support informed decisions regarding the utilization of the CSX Gulf Coast rail corridor. Now, we are troubled that Amtrak seeks an injunction from the Surface Transportation Board to bypass this important step in assessing operational service and capacity in this important freight corridor.



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The Business Council of Alabama respectfully asks the Board require Amtrak to complete their modeling study and supplemental rail infrastructure and cost assessments to identify the improvements necessary to efficiently and cost competitively support both freight rail and passenger services at Mobile, Alabama.

Sincerely,

Katie Boyd Britt

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Katie Boyd Britt". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

C: Parties of Record