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**ALABAMA STATE SENATE**  
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ENTERED  
Office of Proceedings  
April 5, 2021  
Part of  
Public Record

**GREG REED**

SENATE PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE  
PHONE (334) 261-0894

SENATE DISTRICT 5  
FAYETTE, JEFFERSON,  
TUSCALOOSA,  
WALKER AND WINSTON

April 5, 2021

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

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

Dear Ms. Davis:

In recent years, the Alabama Legislature has worked tirelessly to support needed improvements in our state's infrastructure. In addition to addressing our roads and bridges, we have also had the opportunity to support additional projects which will benefit commerce in Alabama for many decades to come. One such project I continue to watch closely is the deepening and widening of the Port of Mobile – which is being supported by both federal and state funding and will enhance our state seaport's competitiveness as our shippers strive to reach new global markets.

The issue of the return of passenger rail service to the Gulf Coast is one I have monitored from a distance over the last several years. Over that time, I have taken note of concerns expressed by the Alabama State Port Authority as well as several Alabama trade associations who trust and rely on rail service to transport their products – which includes many commodities crucial to the state's economy. Those groups have been clear and consistent with their requests for impact data and information; therefore, I was very discouraged to learn that Amtrak has recently chosen to abandon a key impact study, which was being conducted jointly with several freight railroads, prior to its completion.

Many key political leaders, including Governor Kay Ivey and US Senator Richard Shelby, have stated their desire to see the agreed upon freight rail impact study completed, so that all parties can fully understand the impacts of the proposed passenger service – to include possible infrastructure upgrades necessary to operate safely and efficiently with increased traffic on the rails. In fact, Governor Ivey has declined to pledge state support for the Amtrak proposal absent this information, and I applaud her for that position. Over the last decade, our state has become a national leader in economic development, and we continue to see additional export capacity added at the Port of Mobile. These facts are very important to the matter at hand.

My support of the Port of Mobile's position and the need for a freight rail impact study should not be construed to mean that I am fundamentally opposed to the re-introduction of passenger rail in our state; rather, I believe that it is important to seek as much information as possible regarding impacts to freight rail service and the potential for ripple effects across state commerce generally. It is clear from the reported information that many questions currently remain unanswered.

I appreciate the opportunity to submit these concerns in writing and thank you for attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,



Greg J. Reed  
Alabama Senate President Pro Tempore

cc: Service List for Finance Docket No. 36496

**CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE**

I hereby certify that on this 5th day of April, 2021, a copy of the foregoing Letter was served by email or U.S. mail on the service list for Finance Docket No. 36496.

/s/ Greg J. Reed  
Greg J. Reed  
Alabama Senate President Pro Tempore