



Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

April 10, 2014

*Anthony Foxx
Secretary of Transportation
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, D.C. 20590*

Dear Secretary Foxx:

Thank you for meeting with us to discuss our constituents' concerns regarding Florida East Coast Industries' All Aboard Florida (AAF) passenger rail project. While we wait for information to understand any positive economic benefits of AAF, we have serious concerns with the potential detrimental impacts on existing businesses and the quality-of-life of residents in South Florida and the Treasure Coast. We strongly believe it is essential that the Department of Transportation appropriately weight AAF's benefits to its private owners with the safety, economy, and livability of the communities it travels through.

While AAF may boost tourism and business in Florida's biggest cities, it also may delay emergency vehicles, create traffic jams, raise noise pollution, and block waterways along hundreds of miles of tracks. In addition, AAF may force Florida towns and cities on already-tight budgets to foot the bill for quiet crossings and future maintenance.

We urge the Department to require AAF to completely address the above concerns before considering approving AAF's application for a Railroad Rehabilitation & Improvement Financing (RRIF) loan. Specifically, we request that the Department require that Florida East Coast Industries (FECI) work with neighboring municipalities, counties, the state, the federal government, and other businesses to:

- 1) Install safety equipment necessary to meet maximum FRA safety guidelines along the FECI line and at grade crossings;*
- 2) Share financial responsibility for quiet zones and ongoing maintenance at grade crossings in Palm Beach County and the Treasure Coast;*
- 3) Share financial responsibility for bridge upgrades to speed the raising and lowering of drawbridges, and widen bridge pilings to allow two-way boat traffic to pass;*

- 4) *Structure the new AAF train schedule to avoid significantly delaying emergency vehicles at grade crossings, worsening surrounding road traffic, and unduly congesting our waterways by blocking maritime traffic at drawbridges;*
- 5) *Move freight traffic from the FECI railroad to the adjacent CSX line before AAF passenger service begins to balance the number of trains on the FECI line and to prevent the time that waterways and roads are blocked;*
- 6) *Demonstrate that AAF's passenger service is a financially sound investment in and of itself, and that AAF will be able to make timely debt payments on the potential federal loan after operating and maintenance expenses;*
- 7) *Publish publicly an economic impact study describing the positive and negative effects to commerce, property values, tax revenues, real estate sales, and tourism; and*
- 8) *Provide the expected ridership levels from foreign travelers, interstate travelers coming from outside the Miami-Dade/Broward/Palm Beach tri-county area, and travelers within the tri-county area.*

We understand that AAF will be providing you with its plans to address these matters, and we hope you will make this information publicly available as you receive it. Thank you once again for taking the time to discuss the concerns of South Florida and Treasure Coast residents. We look forward to working with you to address these issues.

Sincerely,


Lois Frankel
MEMBER OF CONGRESS


Patrick E. Murphy
MEMBER OF CONGRESS