

MICHAEL J. GRELLA
Executive Director
morella@jupiterinletdistrict.org

NIKKI A. COSTANZO
Administrative Assistant
ncostanzo@jupiterinletdistrict.org

April 9, 2014

Patrick E. Murphy
Member of Congress
18th District FL
1517 Longworth Building
Washington, DC 20215

Re: All Aboard Florida

Dear Representative Murphy:

Thank you for the opportunity to share with you Jupiter Inlet District's concerns regarding the All Aboard Florida (AAF) project proposed by Florida East Coast Industries (FECI).

The Jupiter Inlet District is an independent special taxing district charged with the operation and maintenance of the Jupiter Inlet, as well as portions of the Loxahatchee River and its tributaries. Because our primary emphasis is navigability, we are concerned about the potentially significant impacts AAF will have on boaters seeking passage beneath the Loxahatchee River FEC RR Bridge. As you may know, the bridge allows for only 4 ft. of clearance at Mean High Water (MHW).

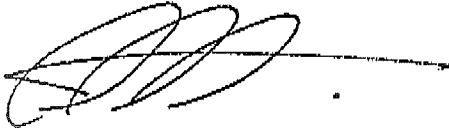
The AAF service proposes sixteen daily round-trip trains, with hourly departures from Miami and Orlando between approximately 6 AM and 9 PM, totaling 32 additional passenger trains daily on the corridor between Miami and Orlando (with stations also located in Fort Lauderdale and West Palm Beach). FECI will install a second track between Miami and Cocoa to accommodate the new service, with both tracks available for passenger and freight service, in addition to the installation of a new track between Cocoa and Orlando.

Our analysis shows that these additional 32 trips over the Loxahatchee River RR Bridge, along with an estimated 14 to 16 freight trains, will result in as much as 40 minutes on the hour during which the bridge would be in the process of closing, completely down, or opening. We believe this creates a potentially unreasonable obstruction of the free navigation of vessels, resulting in significant delay and even risk of collision.

The District has contracted with Taylor Engineering, Inc., to conduct a vessel traffic study and initial data collection shows as many as 60 boats per hour passing through the draw. Currently an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is being processed by the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) for the proposed West Palm Beach to Cocoa segment and they are seeking input from various federal agencies concerning All Aboard Florida's impact.

The JID is also concerned about the structure of the Bridge itself: It is almost 90 years old and, while purported to have 10-20 years of useful life remaining, the frequency of mechanical breakdowns gives one reason to be skeptical.

On behalf of the JID Board of Commissioners, I want to thank you for the opportunity to share our concerns about the proposed All Aboard Florida project with you.



George G. Gentile, Chairman
Jupiter Inlet District Commission