



SOUTHERN RAIL COMMISSION



PRESS CONFERENCE

SOUTHERN RAIL COMMISSION ANNOUNCES ECONOMIC IMPACT OF PASSENGER RAIL TO MISSISSIPPI GULF COAST

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When: Monday, June 18, 2018 – 2:00 pm

Where: Gulfport Train Depot - 1419 27th Avenue

Who: Tom King, MDOT District 1 Commissioner
Knox Ross, Vice Chair, Southern Rail Commission
Yuanyuan Zhang, PhD, Professor of Research, Trent Lott National Center, University of Southern MS
John Robert Smith, Chair, Transportation for America; Former Mayor, Meridian, MS
and others

Why: The Trent Lott National Center at the University of Southern Mississippi has prepared a report detailing the economic benefits to the Mississippi taxpayers of restored passenger rail along the gulf coast.

The key finding from this report estimates the return on investment for this train is between \$64 million and \$525 million annually depending on the increase in tourism.

Federal funding is available for the restoration of passenger rail service along the gulf coast, and the deadline to apply for it is June 21st. These grants require a non-federal match. A combined state-local commitment is envisioned to cover the \$14.82 million needed from Mississippi.

The Governor is working with the three coastal counties to secure the non-federal match required to make this service a reality. These funds would flow over several years so the Governor and localities will never have to write a check for all the money at one time.

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About the Southern Rail Commission

The SRC engages and informs public and private rail interests to support and influence southeast passenger rail initiatives. They promote the safe, reliable and efficient movement of people and goods to enhance economic development along rail corridors; provide transportation choices; and facilitate emergency evacuation routes.

The Commission was founded in June of 1982 by the 97th Congress which enabled the formation of an interstate rail compact, which was subsequently approved by the Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama legislatures. The Southern Rail Commission is comprised of governor-appointed commissioners from each member state. For more information, visit www.SouthernRailCommission.org

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