May 21, 2018

The Honorable Elaine L. Chao
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue
Washington D.C. 20590

Dear Secretary Chao:

As Governor of the State of Mississippi, I am writing in furtherance of restoring passenger rail service along the Gulf Coast. As you may know, the Coast had passenger rail service from 1894 to 2005. However, because of the damage caused by Hurricane Katrina, the long distance Amtrak train between New Orleans, Louisiana and Orlando, Florida was suspended indefinitely. The Gulf region has gone without any passenger rail service since and its absence continues to hurt the communities once served.

A University of Southern Mississippi (USM) study indicates that there is the potential for a significant economic benefit to the State of Mississippi and its residents from increased tourism generated from passenger rail service across the Gulf Coast. The restored passenger rail service along the Gulf Coast would service six cities directly and over 30 communities indirectly along the 138-mile route between New Orleans, Louisiana and Mobile, Alabama. This service will provide jobs, economic development opportunities, and improved connections for residents and additional travel options for tourists. If implemented properly, passenger service will not only create economic success for the Gulf Coast states but will bring connectivity and build communities.

I commend the efforts of the Southern Rail Commission (SRC) of beginning the process for the states of Mississippi, Alabama, and Louisiana to partner with Amtrak to restore service. The SRC is the only multi-state rail compact created by the U.S. Congress and since 1982, the SRC has worked to expand passenger rail service across the South, including restoring rail service along the Gulf Coast. I support a coordinated effort between SRC along with local, state, federal, and private entities that finds a common sense approach through consensus and negotiation that allows for the restoration of passenger service but does not hinder existing freight operations.

I am very encouraged by the possibilities passenger rail service may provide for Mississippi and the entire Gulf Coast. It is my understanding that the Mississippi Department of Transportation has committed to providing operating support for the project. I look forward to working with your team and all interested parties in the months ahead on this important issue.

Sincerely,

Phil Bryant
Governor
May 21, 2018

The Honorable Elaine L. Chao
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue
Washington D.C. 20590

Dear Secretary Chao:

The Mississippi Transportation Commission is in strong support of restoring passenger rail service along the Gulf Coast. The University of Southern Mississippi has studied this project and determined that it will provide significant economic benefits to the residents of Mississippi, particularly the ones along the Gulf Coast. To achieve this important economic development goal, the Southern Rail Commission (SRC) will be applying for FY17 Restoration and Enhancement (R&E) Grants Program funding. We support this application as restored train service will further the economic recovery of the Gulf Coast region and improve the mobility of our residents along the Gulf Coast. This letter is to inform you that we will demonstrate support for this project by committing to providing the necessary match for the R&E program for the first three years of restored service through some of Mississippi’s Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality improvement (CMAQ) program dollars, or any other available funds. Thank you for your favorable consideration.

As you may know, the Gulf Coast had passenger rail service from 1894 to 2005. However, because of the damage caused by Hurricane Katrina, the long distance Amtrak train between New Orleans, Louisiana and Orlando, Florida was suspended indefinitely. The Gulf region has gone without any passenger rail service since, and its absence continues to hurt the communities once served.

The Southern Rail Commission is the only multi-state rail compact created by the U.S. Congress, and since 1982, the SRC has worked to expand passenger rail service across the South, including restoring rail service along the Gulf Coast is consistent with the intent of Congress when they created the interstate rail compact in 1982, passed the FAST Act in 2015, and enacted the FY 2017 and 2018 appropriations.
Senators Thad Cochran and Roger Wicker, as well as others created the Gulf Coast Working Group (GCWG) in 2005 to determine a path forward for passenger rail service in the region. The group included the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA), Amtrak, the host railroad, the SRC, and elected officials and business leaders from the Gulf Coast. The GCWG final report, released on July 17, 2017, identified one service option as a daily business train, making two round trips a day, between New Orleans, Louisiana to Mobile, Alabama that links Mississippi coastal cities. The report identified the operating costs to restore this level of service and potential sources of federal funding to cover the projected costs of restoration. The segment that would be restored under this proposal would be New Orleans to Mobile. The SRC has been working diligently to identify state and local funding sources necessary to secure the federal funding to restore this crucial service.

We are aware of the success of reliable state supported passenger rail in other states, including the Downeaster and the Vermont service. The Downeaster in particular has shown how new passenger rail service can revitalize local communities and their economies. Since the Downeaster service started, the communities along the route have seen a 22% increase in visitors and the Downeaster is now an economic catalyst for those communities. The restored Gulf Coast passenger rail service would be a similar economic catalyst for the Mississippi communities along the Gulf Coast.

As mentioned, the University of Southern Mississippi has determined that restoring passenger rail service along the Gulf Coat would provide tremendous benefits, particularly to those who live and work in the region. This restored service will continue the economic recovery of communities devastated by Hurricane Katrina, enhance corridor mobility and safety, and allow for safer and more efficient hurricane evacuations by providing a daily passenger service that is business and tourism friendly.

The restored passenger rail service along the Gulf Coast would service six cities directly and over 30 communities indirectly along the 138-mile route between New Orleans, Louisiana and Mobile, Alabama. This service will provide jobs, economic development opportunities, and improved connections for residents and additional travel operations for tourists. For these reasons we strongly support restoring this service.

An R&E grant would help facilitate the restoration of passenger rail along the Gulf Coast by ensuring the passenger rail service has sufficient time to increase ridership and revenue and integrate itself into the fabric of the communities it will serve. Historically, state supported passenger trains had 100% of their operating expenses covered by the federal government. An R&E grant to offset some of the operating expenses for the Gulf Coast passenger rail would be consistent with this historical practice and lower the financial burden initially to operate the train while the Southern Rail Commission works with local and private partners to raise ridership and revenue.
The Mississippi Transportation Commission is committed to providing operating support for restoring passenger rail service along the Gulf Coast from the Mississippi Department of Transportation’s allocation of Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) improvement program dollars or any other available funds. It is our understanding that with a successful R&E grant, the projected operating support requested from Mississippi DOT would be $725,000 in the first year, $929,333 in the second year, and $1.394 million in the third year for a total not to exceed $3.045 million in operating support over three years. We are committed to make those CMAQ dollars or any other funds available to match any expenditures of a federal R&E award for operating support of the project as referenced above.

The citizens of the Gulf Coast have dreamed of a day with restored passenger service along the Gulf Coast. A successful R&E grant would go a long way toward making that dream a reality. Therefore, we humbly request your favorable consideration of this endeavor to provide additional economic opportunity to the Gulf by restoring passenger rail service to the Gulf Coast.

Sincerely,

Tom King, Southern Transportation Commissioner

Dick Hall, Central Transportation Commissioner

Mike Tagert, Northern Transportation Commissioner
WHEREAS, the cities and counties of the Mississippi Gulf Coast have been actively seeking the restoration of passenger rail following suspension of the Sunset Limited due to Hurricane Katrina in 2005; and,

WHEREAS, the loss of this rail service at a time when our coast was already decimated by the storm exacerbated the loss that the people were feeling, that in reality we were disconnected from much of the country; and,

WHEREAS, the current efforts of the Gulf Coast Working Group, along with the Federal Railroad Administration, Southern Rail Commission, Amtrak, CSX and other key stakeholders to restore passenger rail service along the CSX rail line from New Orleans, Louisiana to Florida has the unbridled support of the public and this body, as this service will be a major linchpin in the sustainable recovery of the Mississippi Gulf Coast; and,

WHEREAS, the benefits of having passenger rail that connects the Gulf Coast states to this to Amtrak, the national rail system, can be measured as being regionally and nationally significant. This service will provide:

1. Mobility and access, connecting people to places for jobs, schools, health care and recreation that may not otherwise have no means of travel;
2. Connection to a nation-wide rail system to travel across the country in a safe, relaxed environment;
3. Economic development initiatives in proximity to the station locations and across the Gulf Coast region;
4. Intermodal connectivity to complete the trips via automobile, public transportation, bicycles and as pedestrians.

NOW, THEREFORE, the City of Bay St. Louis, Mississippi expresses its wholehearted support of the restoration of daily passenger rail service to the Gulf Coast from Louisiana to Florida; and

FURTHERMORE, the Mayor and Council pledges to work with the Gulf Coast Working Group to satisfy the demands of the people in our region and the nation’s Capital for a well-planned, cost effective rail service;

THUS, LASTLY, this governing body commend the Southern Rail Commission and our U.S. Congressional Delegation, for their vision and dedication to the sustained recovery and growth of the Mississippi Gulf Coast.

Dated:

By:

Attest:

July 15, 2016
May 22, 2018

The Honorable Elaine L. Chao  
U.S. Department of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Avenue  
Washington, DC 20590

The Honorable Ronald Batory  
Federal Railroad Administration  
1200 New Jersey Avenue  
Washington, DC 20590

Subject: Support for Southern Rail Commission FY17 CRISI, R&E Grants

Dear Secretary Chao and Administrator Batory:

In February, the FRA made available funding through the Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvements (CRISI) Program and the Restoration and Enhancement Grants (REG) Program. These two programs benefit the restoration of Gulf Coast passenger rail service to America’s Gulf Coast, suspended since Hurricane Katrina in 2005 - which includes the City of Gulfport, Mississippi. The Southern Rail Commission (SRC) is actively preparing the necessary grant applications to access funding through these programs that will support needed infrastructure improvements and offset state-level initial operational costs to restore a daily passenger service between Mobile and New Orleans. These Federal investments will leverage significant state funding and help create jobs, economic development opportunities, improved connections for residents, and additional travel options for tourists. This daily passenger rail service will enhance mobility, reduce highway environmental impacts, and allow for safer and more efficient hurricane evacuations and response.

With this letter, I want to express my support for the restoration of passenger service to the Gulf Coast, and to the SRC as it seeks funding commitments from Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama for the FY17 CRISI and R&G grant applications.

Sincerely yours,

Billy Hewes  
Mayor

cc: John Robert Smith, Chair, Transportation For America
There came on for consideration at a duly constituted meeting of the Mayor and Members of the City Council of the City of Gulfport, Mississippi, held on the 5th day of July, 2016, the following Resolution:

**RESOLUTION OF THE GULFPORT CITY COUNCIL TO EXPRESS SUPPORT FOR THE RESTORATION OF PASSENGER RAIL SERVICE TO THE MISSISSIPPI GULF COAST, AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES**

WHEREAS, the cities and counties of the Mississippi Gulf Coast have been actively seeking the restoration of passenger rail following suspension of the Sunset Limited due to Hurricane Katrina in 2005; and

WHEREAS, the loss of this rail service at a time when our coast was already decimated by the storm exacerbated the loss that the people were feeling, that in reality we were disconnected from much of the country; and,

WHEREAS, the current efforts of the Gulf Coast Working Group, along with the Federal Railroad Administration, Southern Rail Commission, Amtrak, CSX and other key stakeholders to restore passenger rail service along the CSX rail line from New Orleans, Louisiana to Florida has the unbridled support of the public and this body, as this service will be a major linchpin in the sustainable recovery of the Mississippi Gulf Coast; and,

WHEREAS, the benefits of having passenger rail that connects the Gulf Coast states to Amtrak, the national rail system, can be measured as being regionally and nationally significant. This service will provide:

1. Mobility and access, connecting people, who may not otherwise have any means of travel, to places for jobs, schools, health care and recreation;
2. Connection to a nation-wide rail system to travel across the country in a safe, relaxed environment;

3. Economic development initiatives in proximity to the station locations and across the Gulf Coast region;

4. Intermodal connectivity to complete the trips via automobile, public transportation, and bicycles and as pedestrians.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF GULFPORT, MISSISSIPPI, AS FOLLOWS, TO WIT:

Section 1. That the matters, facts and things recited in the Preamble hereto are hereby adopted as the official findings of the Governing Authority.

Section 2. That the City of Gulfport hereby expresses its wholehearted support of the restoration of daily passenger rail service to the Gulf Coast from Louisiana to Florida.

Section 3. That the City of Gulfport hereby pledges to work with the Gulf Coast Working Group to satisfy the demands of the people in our region and the nation’s Capital for a well-planned, cost effective rail service.

Section 4. That the City of Gulfport commends the Southern Rail Commission and our U.S. Congressional Delegation, for their vision and dedication to the sustained recovery and growth of the Mississippi Gulf Coast.

Section 5. That this Resolution be, and it is hereby ordered to be spread on the minutes of the governing Authority, and to be in full force and effect upon its passage and enactment according to law and that a copy of this Resolution be provided to the South Mississippi Planning and Development District in order that they may provide a copy to the Gulf Cost Working Group, the Southern Rail Commission, our US Congressional District, as needed, and to any others as may be beneficial.
The above and foregoing Resolution, after having been first reduced to writing and ready by the Clerk, was introduced by Councilmember Pucheu, seconded by Councilmember Casey, and was adopted by the following roll call vote:

**YEAS:**
Casey
Dombrowski
Walker
Sharp
Flowers
Pucheu

**NAYS:** None

**ABSENT:** Holmes-Hines

WHEREUPON the President declared the motion carried and the Resolution adopted, this the 5th day of July, 2016.

ADOPTED:

Ronda S. Cole, Clerk of Council
F.B. “Rusty” Walker, IV, President

The above and foregoing Resolution having been submitted to and approved by the Mayor, this the 6th day of July, 2016.

APPROVED:

Billy Hewes, Mayor
April 18, 2018

The Honorable Elaine L. Chao
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue
Washington, DC 20590

The Honorable Ronald Batory
Federal Railroad Administration
1200 New Jersey Avenue
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary Chao and Administrator Batory:

As Mayor of Biloxi, I’m writing to convey our strong support for restoring passenger rail service along the Gulf Coast. To achieve this important goal, the Southern Rail Commission (SRC) is applying for FY 2017 Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvements (CRISI) and Restoration and Enhancement (R&E) Grants Program funding. I am pleased to support these applications.

As you may know, the Gulf Coast had passenger rail service until 2005. However, Hurricane Katrina created storm damage that led to the indefinite suspension of long distance Amtrak train operations between New Orleans, Louisiana and Orlando, Florida. With CRISI and R&E funds, the SRC seeks to reestablish a passenger rail route between New Orleans and Mobile, Alabama. This restored service will continue the economic recovery of communities like Biloxi and the Mississippi Coast, which were devastated by Hurricane Katrina. It will also enhance corridor mobility and safety, and allow for safer and more efficient hurricane evacuations by providing a daily passenger service that is business and tourism friendly.

Biloxi enjoyed a robust tourism economy before Katrina, but is still working to recapture the numbers of annual visitors and recover the strong sales tax contribution those visitors contributed to our City and our State. We applaud SRC’s effort to restore Gulf Coast passenger rail service and the support of FRA. Federal investment will leverage significant state funding and help to create jobs, economic development opportunities, improved connections for residents, and additional travel options for tourists. Specifically, Biloxi supports SRC’s proposed CRISI/R&E project as it will:

- Improve our quality of life
- Help recover lost tourism, increase visitation and expand our reach into new locations
- Create jobs for local residents and encourage new residents
- Increase sales tax collections that benefit Biloxi and the State of Mississippi
- Encourage entrepreneurship across the Gulf Coast corridor

I respectfully request your favorable consideration of this multi-state endeavor to bring back passenger rail service to the Gulf Coast.

Sincerely,

Andrew “FoFo” Gilich
Mayor
City of Biloxi
Resolution No. 215-16

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING SUBMITTAL OF A GRANT APPLICATION TO THE SOUTHERN RAIL COMMISSION AND COMMITTING REQUIRED MATCH TO IMPROVE SAFE ACCESS AND BETTER CONNECTIVITY FROM THE BILOXI DOWNTOWN RAILWAY PLATFORM

WHEREAS, the Southern Rail Commission has federal grant funds available to assist communities in Alabama and Mississippi along the designated federal Gulf Coast High Speed Rail (HSR) corridor that are planning for restored passenger rail service to improve stations and station areas to ensure safe access and better connectivity to and from the station, improve conveniences for riders and leverage the economic opportunity that comes with station redevelopment; and

WHEREAS, the City of Biloxi is eligible to apply for a grant to the Southern Rail Commission to assist in funding a pedestrian walkover to provide safe connectivity between its rail station platform, which is located on the Gulf Coast HSR corridor, and downtown Biloxi’s Coast Transit Authority multimodal facility; and

WHEREAS, the City of Biloxi Comprehensive Plan, adopted December 2009, identifies the need for pedestrian enhancements to support downtown redevelopment and to expand multimodal transportation opportunities; and

WHEREAS, the City of Biloxi has determined that it is in the best interest of the City, its residents and its economy to apply for a Southern Rail Commission grant in the amount of $250,000 to assist in funding a pedestrian walkover to provide safe connectivity between its rail station platform and the multimodal facility; and

WHEREAS, the Southern Rail Commission grant program requires a 50 percent minimum match that is available for obligation at the time of grant application; and
Res. No. 215-16

WHEREAS, the City of Biloxi currently has $250,000 in its Economic Development Security Fund, that may be reserved as the required match for the Southern Rail Commission grant program, which would be paid back over a five-year period from increased sales tax revenue or other identified funds directly generated from the project;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BILOXI, MISSISSIPPI, THAT:

SECTION 1: The statements, findings, determinations, and conclusions contained in the preamble of this resolution are hereby adopted, ratified and incorporated herein.

SECTION 2: The Mayor, Municipal Clerk and such other representatives as may be necessary hereby are authorized to prepare a grant application requesting $250,000 to assist in funding a pedestrian walkover to provide safe connectivity between the Biloxi rail station platform, which is located on the Gulf Coast HSR corridor, and downtown Biloxi’s CTA multimodal facility and to provide any additional information as may be required by the Southern Rail Commission to complete its review of said application.

SECTION 3: The Mayor, Municipal Clerk of the City of Biloxi, and any other appropriate staff, are hereby authorized and directed to reserve $250,000 in the Biloxi Economic Development Security Fund, to provide the minimum match required to leverage a Southern Rail Commission grant. Further, should this grant be funded, said match funds will be paid back over a five-year period from increased sales tax revenue or other identified funds directly generated from the project.
Res. No. 215-16

The foregoing Resolution having first been reduced to writing, was read by the Clerk and moved by Councilmember Newman, seconded by Councilmember Gines, and was adopted by the following vote:

YEAS: Lawrence Gines Glavan Fayard NAYS: Deming Tisdale Newman

The President then declared the Resolution adopted this the 3rd day of May, 2016.

Submitted to and approved by the Mayor, this the ___ day of May, 2016.

ATTEST:    APPROVED:

[Signature]
DEPUTY CLERK OF THE COUNCIL

[Signature]
MAYOR
February 21, 2018

The Honorable Phil Bryant
Governor
State of Mississippi
P.O. Box 139
Jackson, MS 39205

Dear Governor Bryant:

On behalf of the City Council of the City of Pascagoula, I am writing in support of restoring passenger rail service along the Coast, servicing the cities of Biloxi, Pascagoula, Gulfport and Bay St. Louis with terminus in New Orleans and Mobile. Eighty-five miles of this route would cross Mississippi, providing new jobs, economic development opportunities, improved connections for residents and additional travel options for tourists.

To restore this service, we support the Southern Rail Commission’s (SRC) plan to apply for $19.7 million from the federal Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvements (CRISI) program to complete the necessary capital improvements in Mississippi to restore passenger service in the region. As part of the federal grant, Mississippi would use $19.7 million in state funds from the BP oil spill fund as a match to the federal dollars. Similarly, we support SRC’s plan to pursue Restoration and Enhancement Grants from the federal government to cover the initial operating costs of the passenger rail service once restored.

Passenger rail service was suspended along the Gulf Coast following Hurricane Katrina in 2005. Since then, communities along the Coast have been eager to restore the lost service. As an example, Amtrak, in partnership with the SRC, ran an inspection train along the route in February 2016. Thousands of residents showed up to show support for restoring service. You were able to join the Coast Mayors for the ride and to witness the community’s support for this project first-hand. The SRC has been working with these communities to identify the infrastructure improvements necessary to restore service and the financing necessary to make it happen.

The federally chartered Gulf Coast Working Group (GCWG), consisting of the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA), Amtrak, the SRC, railroad carriers, and State and local governments evaluated all options for restoring passenger rail service along the Gulf Coast. The GCWG final report, released on July 17, 2017, identified two preferred options. The first option identified was a daily business train between New Orleans, Louisiana to Mobile, Alabama that links Mississippi coastal cities. The second option was as a daily, long-distance route linking New Orleans, Louisiana to Orlando, Florida that would run through Mississippi’s coastal cities. The report identified the capital costs and operating costs to restore both services and potential sources of federal funding to cover these costs.
The first segment that would be restored would be New Orleans to Mobile. Four key capital improvements in Mississippi are needed to implement a viable service. The total cost of these improvements is estimated to be $39.43 million, with Mississippi contributing $19.7 million of the cost and the other $19.7 million coming through the federal CRISI program. With the support and leadership of Mississippi’s United States Senators Thad Cochran and Roger Wicker, $68 million has been appropriated for CRISI, with a portion of the funds intended to help restore passenger rail service to the Gulf region.

In addition, we support Mississippi purchasing two state of the art train sets to operate the service at a cost of $25 million because it’s a great economic development opportunity and the purchase would facilitate an expeditious restoration of service. One funding option that has been identified to purchase the train sets is pursuing a loan from the federal Railroad Rehabilitation and Improvement Financing program (RRIF). The cost of paying back the loan over 30 years is projected between $38 and $44 million. The SRC has inspected the trains and found them to be of high quality and believes they are offered for sale at an unusually reasonable price.

Talgo, the train set’s manufacturer, has promised to put a maintenance facility in the state that chooses to buy the trains. They will further commit to an assembly plant in the state that purchases the train sets when there are further new Talgo orders from the U.S. In addition to the construction jobs created by building the maintenance facility, Talgo estimates that 95 jobs will be created and sustained every year to maintain the trains and the next order of Talgo trainsets will create 200 manufacturing jobs at the new assembly plant. Therefore, by purchasing these train sets, Mississippi could get up to 300 high quality jobs and help continue the economic recovery of the Gulf Coast region.

For these reasons, we write in support of the SRC proposal to secure the financing needed to make the necessary capital improvements and purchase trains to restore passenger rail service along Mississippi’s Gulf Coast.

Sincerely,

Dane Maxwell
Mayor
City of Pascagoula
Resolution of the Mississippi Gulf Coast Regional Convention and Visitors Bureau
d/b/a Visit Mississippi Gulf Coast

In Support of Restoration of Passenger Rail Service
to the MISSISSIPPI GULF COAST

WHEREAS, the cities and counties of the Mississippi Gulf Coast have been actively seeking the restoration of passenger rail service following suspension of the Sunset Limited due to the catastrophic impacts of Hurricane Katrina in 2005; and,

WHEREAS, the loss of this rail service, at a time when our Gulf Coast was already decimated by Hurricane Katrina, exacerbated our disconnection from much of our Country; and

WHEREAS, current efforts of the Gulf Coast Working Group, along with the Federal Railroad Administration, Southern Rail Commission, Amtrak, CSX and other key stakeholders to restore passenger rail service along the CSX rail line from New Orleans, Louisiana to Florida have unbridled support of the public and our regional tourism stakeholders, as this service will be a major linchpin in the sustainable recovery of the Mississippi Gulf Coast; and,

WHEREAS, the benefits of having passenger rail that connects the Gulf Coast states to Amtrak, the national rail system, can be measured as being regionally and nationally significant through impacts which include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Mobility and access, connecting people to places for jobs, schools, health care and recreation that may not otherwise have means of travel;
2. Connection to a nation-wide rail system to travel across the Country in a safe, relaxed environment;
3. Economic development initiatives in proximity to the station locations and across the Gulf Coast region;
4. Intermodal connectivity to complete the trips via automobile, public transportation, bicycles and as pedestrians.

NOW, THEREFORE, upon motion duly made, seconded, and unanimously carried, it is hereby RESOLVED that the Mississippi Gulf Coast Regional Convention and Visitors Bureau d/b/a Visit Mississippi Gulf Coast fully endorses and supports restoration of daily passenger rail service to and along the Gulf Coast region from, through and to the states of Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama and Florida.
FURTHER, IT IS RESOLVED that the Mississippi Gulf Coast Regional Convention and Visitors Bureau d/b/a Visit Mississippi Gulf Coast hereby pledges to work with the Gulf Coast Working Group to fulfill the needs of the people of the Gulf Coast region and the nation's capital for a well-planned, cost effective rail service.

FURTHER, IT IS RESOLVED that the Southern Rail Commission and our U.S. Congressional delegation should be and hereby are commended for their vision and dedication to the sustained recovery and growth of the Mississippi Gulf Coast.

THIS RESOLUTION was duly passed and adopted by the Mississippi Gulf Coast Regional Convention and Visitors Bureau d/b/a Visit Mississippi Gulf Coast on the 28th day of June, 2016.

MISSISSIPPI GULF COAST REGIONAL CONVENTION AND VISITORS BUREAU
d/b/a VISIT MISSISSIPPI GULF COAST

BY: ________________________________

TITLE: PRESIDENT

ATTEST: ____________________
Resolution of the Mississippi Gulf Coast Chamber of Commerce, Inc.

Whereas, the Mississippi Gulf Coast have been actively seeking the restoration of passenger rail following suspension of the Sunset Limited due to Hurricane Katrina in 2005; and,

Whereas, the current efforts of the Gulf Coast Working Group, along with the Federal Railroad Administration, Southern Rail Commission, Amtrak, CSX and other key stakeholders to restore passenger rail service along the CSX rail line from New Orleans, Louisiana to Florida has the unbridled support of the public and this body, as this service will be a major linchpin in the sustainable recovery of the Mississippi Gulf Coast; and,

Whereas, the benefits of having passenger rail that connects the Gulf Coast states to this to Amtrak, the national rail system, can be measured as being regionally and nationally significant. This service will provide:

1. Mobility and access, connecting people to places for jobs, schools, health care and recreation that may not otherwise have no means of travel;
2. Connection to a nation-wide rail system to travel across the country in a safe, relaxed environment;
3. Economic development initiatives in proximity to the station locations and across the Gulf Coast region;
4. Intermodal connectivity to complete the trips via automobile, public transportation, bicycles and as pedestrians.

Therefore, the Mississippi Gulf Coast Chamber of Commerce, Inc. expresses its support of the restoration of daily passenger rail service to the Gulf Coast from Louisiana to Florida. This restoration will help in job creation through economic development opportunities, enhanced tourism and reduce environmental and roadway impacts due to personal automobile use, thereby having a positive economic and environmental impact to the Mississippi Gulf Coast; and

Furthermore, the Mississippi Gulf Coast Chamber of Commerce, Inc. commends the Southern Rail Commission and our U.S. Congressional Delegation, for their vision and dedication to the sustained recovery and growth of the Mississippi Gulf Coast.

Mississippi Gulf Coast Chamber of Commerce, Inc. (Chamber) is a Mississippi non-profit corporation, incorporated June 29, 1988, whose mission is to connect, inform, advocate and develop. As a membership organization, the Chamber is comprised of businesses throughout the Gulf South, and strives to improve the business climate through fostering leadership, advocating for business, and providing information to the community. The mission is accomplished through a partnership with the Biloxi Chamber of Commerce, Gulfport Chamber of Commerce, Long Beach Chamber of Commerce, and Pass Christian Chamber of Commerce. Additional divisions of the Mississippi Gulf Coast Chamber of Commerce, Inc., include Coast Young Professionals, Leadership Gulf Coast, Coast Centurion Association, and the Mississippi Gulf Coast Chamber of Commerce Foundation.

In 2014 the United States Chamber of Commerce awarded the Chamber with 4-start accreditation for its excellence in chamber planning and performance. To achieve accreditation, a chamber must demonstrate quality programs, clear organizational procedures, and effective communications by meeting standards in its operations and programs, including areas of governance, government affairs, and technology.

Kimberly Nastasi, Chief Executive Officer                              Julie Gresham, President                              June 2016
A RESOLUTION SUPPORTING RESTORATION OF PASSENGER RAIL SERVICE BETWEEN NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA, AND ORLANDO, FLORIDA, WITH A DESIGNATED STOP IN HANCOCK COUNTY, MISSISSIPPI

WHEREAS, before Hurricane Katrina, Amtrak’s Sunset Limited passenger line was the only transcontinental passenger rail service from Los Angeles passing through New Orleans to Orlando; and

WHEREAS, Hurricane Katrina damaged a portion of the rail infrastructure along the Gulf Coast as well as caused the loss of other portions of the infrastructure, including the total loss of the passenger rail terminal facility in Mobile, AL, and the mainline rail bridge between Bay St. Louis and Gulfport, MS; and

WHEREAS, Amtrak suspended all service on the eastern portion of the Sunset Limited line from New Orleans through Bay St. Louis, Gulfport, Biloxi, Pascagoula, Mobile, Atmore, Pensacola, Crestview, Chipley, Tallahassee, Madison, Lake City, and Jacksonville to Orlando; and

WHEREAS, CSX Transportation and Norfolk Southern (the freight railroad companies that own tracks on which Gulf Coast passenger rail service will operate) have both committed to cooperating with Amtrak in providing this vital service across the Gulf Coast and to do so in a more efficient manner than prior to Hurricane Katrina; and

WHEREAS, restoration of passenger rail service to the eastern Gulf Coast will facilitate job creation through development opportunities, enhance tourism, and reduce environmental and roadway impacts due to personal automobile use, thereby having a positive economic and environmental impact to the coastal states of Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, and Florida; and

WHEREAS, communities not directly located on the suspended route, and citizens which have limited transportation access, options or physical challenges, will be greatly served through an available long distance intercity passenger rail service within reasonable driving distance that provides links to the regional and national intermodal transportation system; and

WHEREAS, such resumption of passenger rail service will also benefit the entire nation by providing a link to the Gulf Coast from the Midwest and West Coast; and

WHEREAS, the Passenger Rail Investment and Improvement Act of 2008 called for Amtrak to study the potential return of passenger rail service from New Orleans to Orlando; and
WHEREAS, Section 11304 of Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act (or "FAST Act") of 2015 mandates the Federal Railroad Administration to convene a working group to evaluate the restoration of intercity rail passenger services in the Gulf Coast region between New Orleans, Louisiana, and Orlando, Florida, and to submit findings by September 2016.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED the Hancock County, Mississippi, Board of Supervisors hereby recommends and supports the restoration of dependable daily passenger rail service along the suspended route between New Orleans, Louisiana, and Orlando, Florida, with a designated stop in Hancock County, Mississippi.

Passed and duly adopted by the Hancock County Board of Supervisors this the 6th day of June, 2016.

[Signature]
Blaine LaFontaine, Board President

ATTEST: [Signature]
Timothy Kellar, Chancery Clerk
June 21, 2016

Elaine G. Wilkinson  
Executive Director  
Gulf Regional Planning Commission  
1635 Popps Ferry RD, Suite G  
Biloxi, MS 39532  

Dear Elaine:

I am pleased to write this letter of support to restore passenger rail service between New Orleans, Louisiana and Orlando, Florida with a designated stop in Hancock County, Mississippi at our historic depot district. This beautiful depot is one of the few historic landmarks remaining on the Mississippi Gulf Coast and this service would enable the City to graciously and safely receive our much anticipated passengers.

Bay St. Louis and Hancock County have a history that is built upon the second home market—those travelers who, using the train, came to our shores on weekends and summers. This market has a loyal base of support for our area because of this historic resource. Restoring the Amtrak service to this region will rebuild a market that has not yet rebounded since Hurricane Katrina and the Gulf Oil Spill.

It was the very businessmen of the New Orleans area who established the Hancock Chamber 90 years ago to grow commerce in the region. As the largest business organization in the county, we represent 600 member businesses with 2,500 representatives and 20,000 employees. The mission of the Chamber is to promote the social, civic and economic well-being of Hancock County with particular emphasis upon the development of jobs and the promotion of retail, industrial, agricultural and tourism businesses.

We strongly support the combined efforts of governmental entities at the local, state and federal level for this important initiative through the Gulf Coast Working Group, along with the Federal Railroad Administration, Southern Rail Commission, Amtrak, CSX and other key stakeholders to restore passenger rail service along the CSX rail line from New Orleans, Louisiana to Florida to provide:

100 South Beach Boulevard, Suite A, Bay St. Louis, MS 39520  
www.hancockchamber.org / tish@hancockchamber.org
Page Two
Ms. Wilkinson
June 21, 2016

- Mobility and access, connecting people to places for jobs, schools, health care and recreation who may otherwise have no means of travel;
- Connection to a nation-wide rail system to travel across the country in a safe, relaxed environment;
- Economic development initiatives in proximity to the station locations and across the Gulf Coast region; and,
- Intermodal connectivity to complete the trips via automobile, public transportation, bicycles and as pedestrians.

We look forward to working with the Gulf Coast Working Group to satisfy the demands of the people in our region and the nation’s Capital for a well-planned, cost effective rail service; and, we commend the Southern Rail Commission and our U.S. Congressional Delegation, for their vision and dedication to the sustained recovery and growth of the Mississippi Gulf Coast.

Sincerely,

Tish H. Williams
Executive Director
RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
OF JACKSON COUNTY, MISSISSIPPI IN SUPPORT OF THE
RESTORATION OF PASSENGER RAIL SERVICE
TO THE MISSISSIPPI GULF COAST

WHEREAS, the cities and counties of the Mississippi Gulf Coast have been actively seeking the restoration of passenger rail following suspension of the Sunset Limited due to Hurricane Katrina in 2005; and

WHEREAS, the loss of this rail service at a time when our coast was already decimated by the storm exacerbated the loss that the people were feeling, that in reality we were disconnected from much of the country; and,

WHEREAS, the current efforts of the Gulf Coast Working Group, along with the Federal Railroad Administration, Southern Rail Commission, Amtrak, CSX and other key stakeholders to restore passenger rail service along the CSX rail line from New Orleans, Louisiana to Florida has the unbridled support of the public and this body, as this service will be a major linchpin in the sustainable recovery of the Mississippi Gulf Coast; and,

WHEREAS, the benefits of connecting the Gulf Coast states to this national rail system can be measured as being regionally and nationally significant. This service will provide:

1. Mobility and access, connecting people to places for jobs, schools, health care and recreation that may not otherwise have no means of travel; and

2. Connection to a nation-wide rail system to travel across the country in a safe, relaxed environment; and

3. Economic development initiatives in proximity to the station locations and across the Gulf Coast region; and

4. Intermodal connectivity to complete the trips via automobile, public transportation, bicycles and as pedestrians.

NOW, THEREFORE, the Jackson County Board of Supervisors expresses its unqualified support of the restoration of the passenger rail service to the Gulf Coast from Louisiana to Florida; and

FURTHERMORE, the Jackson County Board of Supervisors pledges to work with the Gulf Coast Working Group to satisfy the demands of the people in our region and the nation’s Capital for a well-planned, cost effective rail service;

THUS, LASTLY, the Jackson County Board of Supervisors commends the Southern Rail
Commission and our U.S. Congressional Delegation, for their vision and dedication to the sustained recovery and growth of the Mississippi Gulf Coast.

The motion to approve the foregoing resolution was made by Supervisor Cumbest, seconded by Supervisor Taylor, and the following vote was recorded:

Supervisor Cumbest
Supervisor Harris
Supervisor Taylor
Supervisor Ross
Supervisor Bosarge

RESOLVED, this the 5th day of July, 2016.

ATTEST:

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

Clerk of the Board

President
<Resolution in Support of the Restoration of Passenger Rail Service to the MS Gulf Coast>

By Resolution of the

GULF REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

WHEREAS, the Gulf Regional Planning Commission for the MS Gulf Coast is actively participating as a member of the Gulf Coast Working Group, along with the Federal Railroad Administration, Southern Rail Commission, Amtrak, CSX and other key stakeholders to restore passenger rail service along the CSX rail line from New Orleans, Louisiana to Florida, with stops along the Mississippi Gulf Coast; and,

WHEREAS, by U.S. Congressional legislation, the working group is preparing a report to present to Congress on the implementation of the City of New Orleans daily Amtrak service including a service alternative to provide daily service between New Orleans and Mobile; and,

WHEREAS, the benefits of connecting the Gulf Coast states to this national rail system can be measured as being regionally and nationally significant. This service will provide:

1. Mobility and access, connecting people to places for jobs, schools, health care and recreation that may not otherwise have no means of travel;
2. Connection to a nation-wide rail system to travel across the country in a safe, relaxed environment;
3. Economic development initiatives in proximity to the station locations and across the Gulf Coast region;
4. Intermodal connectivity to complete the trips via automobile, public transportation, bicycles and as pedestrians.

NOW, THEREFORE, the Gulf Regional Planning Commission expresses its wholehearted support of the restoration of daily passenger rail service to the Gulf Coast from Louisiana to Florida; and

FURTHERMORE, the Commission pledges to continue its work on the Gulf Coast Working Group to satisfy the demands of the people in our region and the nation’s Capital for a well-planned, cost effective rail service;

THUS, LASTLY, the Gulf Regional Planning Commission commends the Southern Rail Commission and our U.S. Congressional Delegation, for their vision and dedication to the sustained recovery and growth of the Mississippi Gulf Coast.

By Unanimous Vote of the Gulf Regional Planning Commission, Dated: 5/25/2016

By: W. Brian Fulton, Chairman

Attest: Elaine G. Wilkinson, Executive Director
May 21, 2018

The Honorable Elaine L. Chao
The Honorable Ronald Batory
U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Railroad Administration
1200 New Jersey Avenue
1200 New Jersey Avenue
Washington, DC 20590
Washington, DC 20590

Subject: Support for Southern Rail Commission FY17 CRISI, R&E Grants

Dear Secretary Chao and Administrator Batory:

In February, the FRA made available funding through the Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvements (CRISI) Program and the Restoration and Enhancement Grants (REG) Program. These two programs benefit the restoration of Gulf Coast passenger rail service to America’s Gulf Coast, suspended since Hurricane Katrina in 2005, which included Long Beach. The Southern Rail Commission (SRC) is actively preparing the necessary grant applications to access funding through these programs that will support needed infrastructure improvements and offset state-level initial operational costs to restore a daily passenger service between Mobile and New Orleans. These Federal investments will leverage significant state funding and help create jobs, economic development opportunities, improved connections for residents, and additional travel options for tourists. This daily passenger rail service will enhance mobility, reduce highway environmental impacts, and allow for safer and more efficient hurricane evacuations and response.

With this letter, I want to express my support for the restoration of passenger service to the Gulf Coast, and to the SRC as it seeks funding commitments from Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama for the FY17 CRISI and R&G grant applications.

Sincerely,

George L. Bass
Mayor, City of Long Beach

Courtesy Copy to:
John Robert Smith, Chair, Transportation For America
1152 15th St NW, Suite 450
Washington, DC 20005
A RESOLUTION SUPPORTING RESTORATION OF PASSENGER RAIL SERVICE BETWEEN NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA AND ORLANDO, FLORIDA

WHEREAS, before Hurricane Katrina, Amtrak's Sunset Limited passenger line was the only transcontinental passenger rail service from Los Angeles passing through New Orleans to Orlando; and

WHEREAS, Hurricane Katrina damaged a portion of the rail infrastructure along the Gulf Coast as well as caused the loss of other portions of the infrastructure, including the total loss of the passenger rail terminal facility in Mobile, AL, and the main line rail bridge between Bay St. Louis and Gulfport, MS; and

WHEREAS, Amtrak suspended all service on the eastern portion of the Sunset Limited line from New Orleans through Bay St. Louis, Gulfport, Biloxi, Pascagoula, Mobile, Atmore, Pensacola, Crestview, Chipley, Tallahassee, Madison, Lake City, and Jacksonville to Orlando; and

WHEREAS, CSX Transportation, and Norfolk Southern (the freight railroad companies that own the tracks on which Gulf Coast passenger rail service will operate) have both committed to cooperating with Amtrak in providing this vital service across the Gulf Coast and to do so in a more efficient manner than prior to Hurricane Katrina; and

WHEREAS, restoration of passenger rail service to the eastern Gulf Coast will facilitate job creation through development opportunities, enhance tourism, and reduce environmental and roadway impacts due to personal automobile use, thereby having a positive economic and environmental impact to the coastal states of Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, and Florida; and

WHEREAS, communities not directly located on the suspended route, and citizens which have limited transportation access, options or physical challenges will be greatly served through an available long distance intercity passenger rail service within reasonable driving distance that provides links to the regional and national intermodal transportation system; and

WHEREAS, such resumption of passenger rail service will also benefit the entire nation by providing a link to the Gulf Coast from the Midwest and West Coast; and

WHEREAS, the Passenger Rail Investment and Improvement Act of 2008 called for Amtrak to study the potential return of passenger rail service from New Orleans to Orlando; and

WHEREAS, Section 11304 of Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act (or "FAST Act") of 2015 mandates the Federal Railroad Administration to convene a working group to evaluate the restoration of intercity rail passenger services in the Gulf Coast region between New Orleans, Louisiana and Orlando, Florida and to submit findings by September 2016; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED the City of Pass Christian, Mayor and Board of Aldermen recommends and supports the restoration of dependable, daily passenger rail service along the suspended route between New Orleans, Louisiana and Orlando, Florida.

Passed and duly adopted by the City of Pass Christian Mayor and Board of Aldermen 7th day of June 2016.

By:
Leo Chipper McDermott, Mayor

Attest:
Marian E. Lest
City Clerk

Gulf Coast Working Group Report to Congress  G-102
RESOLUTION BY CITY OF OCEAN SPRINGS

WHEREAS, America is witnessing a passenger rail renaissance with passenger rail ridership having increased throughout the entire country over the past two decades, and Amtrak achieving record ridership in ten out of the past twelve years with ridership at levels not seen since the 1950s;

WHEREAS, the nation’s passenger rail authorization emphasizes that Amtrak’s long-distance and State-supported routes are a vital part of the U.S. intercity passenger rail network, and are a necessary part of that nation’s intermodal transportation system and economy;

WHEREAS, the nation’s passenger rail system represents a tripod that benefits from the interconnected mobility provided by three key components: Long- Distance network, State-Supported Corridors and the Northeast Corridor;

WHEREAS, separating or removing any of the three legs will lead to an overall system and/or financial collapse for the national passenger rail system, as the key components feed (i.e. administratively, financially and passenger use) into and off of one another;

WHEREAS, Amtrak was created to take over the operations of the privately operated, national network of long distance passenger services for the railroads who chose to get out of the business of transporting passenger in the 1970s;

WHEREAS, in exchange for Congress relieving the private railroads of their responsibility to run passenger rail service, Amtrak received the right to access any railroad in the country with passenger service today at incremental costs;

WHEREAS, Amtrak, State and local leaders have found many private railroads usurping the requirements to provide public passenger rail service upon private track by preventing new or expanded access by demanding unwarranted capital improvements or unfeasible schedules that would mitigate ridership and economic development opportunities from the service, all while driving up cost;

WHEREAS, Amtrak has and should continue to focus on expanded service throughout the country by leading negotiations on behalf of the public with freight railroads to planned state and multi-state passenger rail service into operation;

WHEREAS, arbitrarily separating the annual appropriations, operating and capital budgets for the national passenger system three key components into a National System (Long-Distance and State-supported) from the Northeast Corridor does little to improve passenger rail services for this country, and may reverse the passenger rail growth currently witnessed throughout the country;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY OF OCEAN SPRINGS THAT:

The City of Ocean Springs recommends that Congress should focus on laying the foundation for continued growth of rail service throughout the entire country to match demand, build resilience, and connect vulnerable populations and regional economies with megaregions by improving funding to Amtrak, States and local governments to maintain, expand and establish new service; and Pass a passenger rail authorization bill in the 114th Congress that keeps the national system intact by not
There came for consideration of the Mayor and Members of the Council of the City of Gautier, Mississippi the following:

RESOLUTION NUMBER 012-2016

A RESOLUTION SUPPORTING RESTORATION OF PASSENGER RAIL SERVICE BETWEEN NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA AND ORLANDO, FLORIDA

WHEREAS, before Hurricane Katrina, Amtrak's Sunset Limited passenger rail service was the only transcontinental passenger rail service from Los Angeles passing through New Orleans to Orlando; and

WHEREAS, Hurricane Katrina damaged a portion of the rail infrastructure along the Gulf Coast as well as caused the loss of other portions of the infrastructure, including the total loss of the passenger rail terminal facility in Mobile, AL, and the main line rail bridge between Bay St. Louis and Gulfport, MS; and

WHEREAS, Amtrak suspended all service on the eastern portion of the Sunset Limited line from New Orleans through Bay St. Louis, Gulfport, Biloxi, Pascagoula, Mobile, Atmore, Pensacola, Crestview, Chipley, Tallahassee, Madison, Lake City, and Jacksonville to Orlando; and

WHEREAS, CSX Transportation, and Norfolk Southern (the freight railroad companies that own the tracks on which Gulf Coast passenger rail service will operate) have both committed to cooperating with Amtrak in providing this vital service across the Gulf Coast and to do so in a more efficient manner than prior to Hurricane Katrina; and

WHEREAS, restoration of passenger rail service to the eastern Gulf Coast will facilitate job creation through development opportunities, enhance tourism, and reduce environmental and roadway impacts due to personal automobile use, thereby having a positive economic and environmental impact to the coastal states of Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, and Florida; and

WHEREAS, communities not directly located on the suspended route, and citizens which have limited transportation access, options or physical challenges will be greatly served through an available long distance intercity passenger rail service within reasonable driving distance that provides links to the regional and national intermodal transportation system; and

WHEREAS, such resumption of passenger rail service will also benefit the entire nation by providing a link to the Gulf Coast from the Midwest and West Coast; and

WHEREAS, the Passenger Rail Investment and Improvement Act of 2008 called for Amtrak to study the potential return of passenger rail service from New Orleans to Orlando; and

WHEREAS, Section 11304 of Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act (or "FAST Act") of 2015 mandates the Federal Railroad Administration to convene a working group to evaluate the restoration of intercity rail passenger services in the Gulf Coast region between New Orleans, Louisiana and Orlando, Florida and to submit findings by September 2016; and
NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED the City of Gautier recommends and supports the restoration of dependable, daily passenger rail service along the suspended route between New Orleans, Louisiana and Orlando, Florida.

Motion made by Councilman Vaughan, seconded by Councilwoman Martin, and the following vote was recorded.

AYES: Gordon Gollott
Mary Martin
Johnny Jones
Hurley Ray Guillotte
Casey Vaughan
Rusty Anderson
Adam Colledge

NAYS: None

ATTEST:

MAYOR

PASSED AND ADOPTED by Mayor and Members of the Council of the City of Gautier, Mississippi, at the meeting of June 7, 2016.
RESOLUTION BY THE COUNCIL  
CITY OF DIAMONDHEAD, MISSISSIPPI

WHEREAS, the cities and counties of the Mississippi Gulf Coast have been actively seeking the restoration of passenger rail following suspension of the Sunset Limited due to Hurricane Katrina in 2005; and,

WHEREAS, the loss of this rail service at a time when our coast was already decimated by the storm exacerbated the loss that the people were feeling, that in reality we were disconnected from much of the country; and,

WHEREAS, the current efforts of the Gulf Coast Working Group, along with the Federal Railroad Administration, Southern Rail Commission, Amtrak, CSX and other key stakeholders to restore passenger rail service along the CSX rail line from New Orleans, Louisiana to Florida has the unbridled support of the public and this body, as this service will be a major linchpin in the sustainable recovery of the Mississippi Gulf Coast; and,

WHEREAS, the benefits of having passenger rail that connects the Gulf Coast states to this to Amtrak, the national rail system, can be measured as being regionally and nationally significant. This service will provide:

1. Mobility and access, connecting people to places for jobs, schools, health care and recreation that may not otherwise have no means of travel;
2. Connection to a nation-wide rail system to travel across the country in a safe, relaxed environment;
3. Economic development initiatives in proximity to the station locations and across the Gulf Coast region;
4. Intermodal connectivity to complete the trips via automobile, public transportation, bicycles and as pedestrians.

NOW, THEREFORE, City Council expresses its wholehearted support of the restoration of daily passenger rail service to the Gulf Coast from Louisiana to Florida; and

FURTHERMORE, the City Council of Diamondhead, Mississippi pledges to work with the Gulf Coast Working Group to satisfy the demands of the people in our region and the nation’s Capital for a well-planned, cost effective rail service;
**THUS, LASTLY,** the City Council of Diamondhead, Mississippi commends the Southern Rail Commission and our U.S. Congressional Delegation, for their vision and dedication to the sustained recovery and growth of the Mississippi Gulf Coast.

The foregoing Resolution having first been reduced to writing, was read by the Clerk, so moved by Councilmember **Rech**_, seconded by Councilmember **Knobloch**, and acted upon by the following vote:

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Mayor Thomas Schafer, IV then declared the Resolution adopted this 5th day of July, 2016.

**ATTEST:**

Jeannie Klein, City Clerk

**APPROVED:**

Mayor Thomas Schafer, IV
RESOLUTION NO. G-21

RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT FOR THE RESTORATION OF PASSENGER RAIL ON THE GULF COAST

WHEREAS, the cities and counties of the Mississippi Gulf Coast have been actively seeking the restoration of passenger rail following suspension of the Sunset Limited due to Hurricane Katrina in 2005; and,

WHEREAS, the loss of rail service at a time when our coast was already decimated by the storm exacerbated the loss that the people were feeling, that in reality we were disconnected from much of the country; and,

WHEREAS, the current efforts of the Gulf Coast Working Group, along with the Federal Railroad Administration, Southern Rail Commission, Amtrak, CSX and other key stakeholders to restore passenger rail service along the CSX rail line from New Orleans, Louisiana to Florida has the unbridled support of the public and this body, as this service will be a major linchpin in the sustainable recovery of the Mississippi Gulf Coast; and,

WHEREAS, the benefits of having passenger rail that connects the Gulf Coast states to this Amtrak, the national rail system, can be measured as being regionally and nationally significant. This service will provide:

1. Mobility and access, connecting people to places for jobs, schools, health care and recreation that may not otherwise have no means of travel;
2. Connection to a nation-wide rail system to travel across the country in a safe, relaxed environment;
3. Economic development initiatives in proximity to the station locations and across the Gulf Coast region;
4. Intermodal connectivity to complete the trips via automobile, public transportation, bicycles and as pedestrians.

NOW, THEREFORE, the City of D’Iberville expresses its wholehearted support of the restoration of daily passenger rail service to the Gulf Coast from Louisiana to Florida; and

FURTHERMORE, the City of D’Iberville pledges to work with the Gulf Coast Working Group to satisfy the demands of the people in our region and the nation’s Capital for a well-planned, cost effective rail service;