



For Immediate Release

April 9, 2014

Contact: Erin Moffet Hale

561-253-8433

MURPHY TO SEC. FOXX: CONDITIONS MUST BE PLACED ON CONSIDERATION OF ALL ABOARD FLORIDA LOAN

Washington, D.C. - Today, U.S. Representative Patrick E. Murphy (FL-18) sent the following letter to U.S. Department of Transportation Secretary Anthony Foxx urging the Department to require *All Aboard Florida* (AAF) to address serious community concerns with the pending rail project before considering AAF's application for a federal loan. This letter follows a meeting the two had on Monday, where the Congressman shared with the Secretary the concerns received by over 500 members of the community. The rail project would connect Miami and Orlando, but has no stops planned north of West Palm Beach along the Treasure Coast. ***(Please find a copy of the letter below and [attached](#)).***

April 9, 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 me to discuss my constituents' concerns regarding Florida East Coast Industries' All Aboard Florida (AAF) passenger rail project. AAF stands to have a detrimental impact on the quality of life of residents from the Palm Beaches through the Treasure Coast, and it is essential that the Department of Transportation appropriately weigh AAF's benefits to its private owners against the safety, economy, and livability of the communities it impacts. While AAF should boost tourism and business in Florida's biggest cities, it will likely 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.

I 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, I 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 bride 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; and
- 7) Publish publicly an economic impact study describing the positive and negative **effects to commerce, property values, tax revenues, real estate sales, and tourism** specifically in the 18th congressional district of Florida.

I understand that AAF will be providing you with its plans to address these matters, and I 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 Treasure Coast and Palm Beach residents. I look forward to working with you to address these issues.

Sincerely,

Patrick E. Murphy
MEMBER OF CONGRESS

###