



## MEMORANDUM

To: The Honorable Rick Scott, Governor  
Treasure Coast Legislative Delegation

From: Michael J. Busha, AICP  
Executive Director

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'MJB', is placed to the right of the 'From:' field.

Date: March 10, 2014

Subject: All Aboard Florida

The All Aboard Florida (AAF) project, proposed by Florida East Coast Industries (FECI), has been the subject of extensive Council and local government discussion since its announcement in May 2012. The reintroduction of passenger rail service on the Florida East Coast rail corridor has been a long-standing regional priority and has the potential for improved mobility and varied economic and environmental benefits. However, the service as currently proposed concentrates public benefits in communities where stations are planned (West Palm Beach, Fort Lauderdale, Miami, and Orlando), but imposes costs and impacts to all local governments along the corridor. There are virtually no public benefits provided to communities north of Palm Beach County. In addition, cargo-related train traffic is expected to increase with proposed rail corridor and seaport capacity improvements, creating further local and regional impacts. A better balance of shared benefits and reduced costs is necessary to protect all local governments and citizens throughout the Treasure Coast Region.

There are several opportunities available to help mitigate project impacts and more fairly distribute public benefits throughout the Region. These include:

- **State Funding for Quiet Zone Improvements**

- Direct the Florida Rail Enterprise to make quiet zone improvements in the corridor a top priority and allocate sufficient funding from the Transportation Regional Incentive Program (TRIP), from the Strategic Intermodal System (SIS), and other sources for local governments to establish quiet zones, with safe pedestrian pathways, at all grade crossings along the AAF route.
- FDOT should be compelled to require FECI install the highest degree of safety infrastructure at all grade crossings to enable the establishment of quiet zones at the lowest possible cost to state and local government.

*"Bringing Communities Together" • Est.1976*

421 SW Camden Avenue - Stuart, Florida 34994  
Phone (772) 221-4060 - Fax (772) 221-4067 - [www.tcrpc.org](http://www.tcrpc.org)

- Adopt appropriate amendments to Florida Statutes to alleviate any additional insurance obligations for local governments due to the establishment of quiet zones.

- **Stations and Stops in Martin, St. Lucie and Indian River Counties**

Direct FDOT to immediately advance the Amtrak/FEC Corridor Project, which is already funded in the FDOT Five-Year Work Program. This would provide stations in Stuart, Fort Pierce, and Vero Beach, which should be designed to also accommodate AAF trains. FECI should also be directed to add limited AAF service stops in these communities in the first phase of service.

- **Mitigating Railroad Bridge and Navigation Conflicts**

Advance amendments, in conjunction with the Congressional Delegation, to the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR § 117.299 and CFR §117.317) to limit, for example, railroad bridge closures at the Loxahatchee and St. Lucie rivers to not more than fifteen minutes per half-hour. FECI should be required to modernize both bridges with upgraded bridge machinery and provide bridge-tenders during weekends and holidays to increase safety and public access, and reduce navigation delays.

- **Reallocation of Freight to the CSX Rail Corridor**

Direct FDOT to execute a freight rationalization program in conjunction with the AAF project to shift long-distance freight trains away from the FEC's coastal route and onto the CSX's inland route to reduce impacts on local communities and railroad bridge closures.

- **Broadband Access to Public and Select Not-for-Profit Institutions at a Discounted Rate**

Negotiate a discounted rate with FECI's telecommunications division (Parallel Infrastructure) for broadband access by local governments and agencies, educational systems including colleges and universities, hospitals, and not-for-profit biomedical institutions.

- **Establish a Reasonable, Consistent, and Predictable Rate Structure for Municipal Grade Crossings**

Compel FECI to establish standardized agreements with a consistent and reasonable long-term rate structure to provide greater certainty about the annual and periodic costs to local governments and public authorities for maintaining FEC rail corridor grade crossings.

Memorandum to Governor Rick Scott and Treasure Coast Legislative Delegation  
March 10, 2014  
Page Three

- **Funding for Rail Engineering Specialist Position**

Provide funding for one dedicated and independent rail engineering specialist stationed within the Region to assist local governments with the evaluation, design, construction, and implementation of rail improvements related to AAF and other rail services.

These actions will help bring balance to what has become an increasingly imbalanced All Aboard Florida proposal. Council will continue to communicate with FECI and state and local government regarding the project. These issues should be given full consideration during preparation of the forthcoming Environmental Impact Statement. Council stands ready to review this document in cooperation with local governments in the Region.

Thank you for taking a leadership role to champion these actions on behalf of the 54 local governments and 1.9 million citizens of the Treasure Coast Region.

cc: Peter O'Bryan, Chairman, Treasure Coast Regional Planning Council  
Treasure Coast Local Governments  
Treasure Coast MPO/TPOs  
Treasure Coast Regional League of Cities  
Palm Beach League of Cities  
Treasure Coast Council of Local Governments