



TREASURE COAST LEGISLATIVE DELEGATION

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John Winkle, Director
Federal Railway Administration
1200 New Jersey Ave, S.E., Room W 38-31
Washington, D.C. 20590
Via email: AAF_comments@vhb.com

Re: Draft Environmental Impact Statement on All Aboard Florida

Dear Sir:

The intent of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) regarding All Aboard Florida's (AAF) proposal to provide intercity passenger rail service between Miami and Orlando is to disclose all environmental effects associated with the project whether they are beneficial or adverse and allow the public to comment on them. Please accept this letter as the combined comments of the undersigned Members of the Legislative Delegations for Martin County, St. Lucie County and Indian River County.

Having read the DEIS, we would like to express our deep concern over the findings of the report. We share the concerns of our fellow citizens of the Treasure Coast as they have expressed them to us individually or corporately through their elected bodies in Resolutions passed by Martin, St. Lucie and Indian River counties, along with the cities of Stuart, Port St. Lucie, Fort Pierce, St. Lucie Village and Vero Beach.

It is evident from the DEIS that the AAF proposal to run 16 round trip, high speed trains from Miami to Orlando concentrates the public benefit in communities where stations are proposed, Miami, Fort Lauderdale, West Palm Beach and Orlando, with virtually no public benefits north of Palm Beach County. We also feel that the DEIS does not adequately address the specific negative impacts AAF would have on the citizens of the Treasure Coast. It minimizes or narrowly touches on the health, safety and traffic operations, economic, fiscal, environmental and quality of life impacts our residents and local governments will experience as a result of the approval of All Aboard Florida. (See **attached list**.)

The addition of a second track, the straightening of curves and modification of bridges by AAF will also significantly increase the capacity of the Florida East Coast Railroad to transport freight. We have great concerns about the anticipated increase in the number and length of

freight trains that will pass through our communities. The DEIS estimates that the number of trains will increase from 10 to 20 per day by 2019 and the length of each train will increase to over 8,100 feet. The negative impact on vehicular and marine traffic of 52 road and bridge closures per day (20 freight and 32 passenger trains) on our communities will be very significant, especially given the fact that the AAF tracks run through the downtown sections of several cities on the Treasure Coast and cross the St. Lucie River and Loxahatchee River at various locations.

In addition to the above concerns, we question the accuracy of the estimated ridership of approximately 3.5 million passengers per year in 2019 and exceed 4 million by 2030. At a time when most passenger rail in the United States has to be subsidized by government in order to remain operational and has limited ridership, we question the assumption that by 2019 3.5 million visitors or local residents per year will forgo driving or flying between Miami, Ft. Lauderdale or West Palm Beach to Orlando to use AAF.

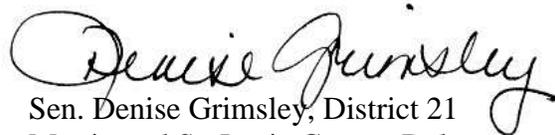
The undersigned Members of the Martin County, St. Lucie County and Indian River County Delegations respectfully request that prior to approving the All Aboard Florida loan or project you carefully and specifically address the concerns expressed in this letter as well as those presented by local governmental entities and the citizens of the Treasure Coast. Should AAF be unable to ameliorate adequately the specific negative impacts of this project on the citizens of the Treasure Coast, we recommend that the loan be denied and the project rejected.

Thank you for your careful consideration of this very important matter.

Sincerely,



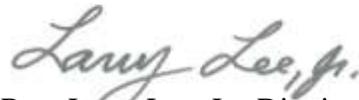
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Martin and St. Lucie County Delegation



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Rep. Larry Lee, Jr., District 84
St. Lucie County Delegation



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St. Lucie and Indian River County Delegation



Sen. Thad Altman, District 16
Indian River County Delegation