September 16, 2009

Ms. Stephanie Kopelousos
Secretary of Transportation
Florida Department of Transportation
605 Suwannee Street
Tallahassee, FL 32399

RE: Amtrak Passenger Service for the FEC Corridor

Dear Ms. Kopelousos:

As a nonpartisan public institution, Brevard Community College collaborates with county and municipal government to lend support to proposals that are designed to benefit our residents. In that spirit, I request that high-priority status be given to the Amtrak project (i.e., “Intercity Rail Component of the FEC Corridor Project”) extending from Jacksonville to Miami, as part of the Federal economic stimulus package for the State of Florida.

Historically, what is now Brevard County grew and developed in tandem with the expansion of the pioneering railroad network of Henry Flagler, and our communities continued to flourish with the easy interconnectivity made possible by railway transit. Although passenger-based railway transit remains a critical component of a sustainable transportation network, passenger service by Amtrak along the eastern coastline is a missing piece of the transportation network in Brevard County.

Passenger train service would expand tourist access, enhance economic development opportunities, improve urban and interurban connectivity, and expand quality of life opportunities for current and future residents. The reintroduction of passenger service will also help promote Florida’s “green economy,” and will also improve our energy independence. For all of these reasons, we appreciate your leadership in helping secure this important investment in the future of our state.

Cordially,

James A. Drake, Ph.D.
President
Brevard Community College

JAD/mhr

/ cc: Michael Busha, Executive Director, Treasure Coast Regional Planning Council
September 16, 2009

The Honorable Charlie Crist, Governor
State of Florida, The Capitol
400 S. Monroe Street
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0001

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