



MERRITT ISLAND REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY

2575 N. Courtenay Parkway, Room 207
Merritt Island, FL 32953

Phone (321) 454-6610
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September 24, 2009

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

Subject: Reintroduction of Amtrak Passenger Service on the FEC Corridor in Florida

Dear Governor Crist:

I am writing to express the strong support of the Merritt Island Redevelopment Agency regarding the reintroduction of Amtrak passenger service on the FEC Corridor along Florida's east coast. Brevard County was formed historically with the introduction of Flagler's railroad in the early 1900s, and our community flourished with the easy interconnectivity provided by rail transit.

Amtrak passenger service along the coastline is a missing piece of the transportation network in Brevard County. Passenger train service would expand tourist access, expand economic development opportunities, improve interconnectivity, and expand quality of life opportunities for our residents. Transit is also a critical component of a sustainable transportation network, one that will help promote Florida's green economy and improve energy independence.

The Board of the Merritt Island Redevelopment Agency resoundingly requests your office prioritize the Amtrak project (termed the "Intercity Rail Component of the FEC Corridor Project"), from Jacksonville to Miami, as part of the Federal economic stimulus package for the State of Florida. We appreciate your leadership in helping secure this important investment in Florida's sustainable future.

Sincerely,

Sue Nisbet-Lawrence
Chairperson – Board of Directors

RESOLUTION 09- 01

A RESOLUTION OF THE MERRITT ISLAND REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY SUPPORTING THE INTERCITY RAIL COMPONENT OF THE FEC CORRIDOR PROJECT (IN THE FORM OF AMTRAK SERVICE) FROM JACKSONVILLE TO MIAMI AND REQUESTING THE ASSISTANCE OF GOVERNOR CRIST AND FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION SECRETARY KOPELOUSOS PRIORITIZE THE PROJECT AS PART OF THE FEDERAL ECONOMIC STIMULUS PACKAGE FOR THE STATE OF FLORIDA AND AS PART OF FLORIDA'S STATEWIDE TRANSPORTATION NETWORK.

WHEREAS, the FEC corridor was historically operated as a passenger rail line along Florida's east coast, traversing or providing rail connections to urban areas like Brevard County/Merritt Island; and

WHEREAS, Florida's east coast historically developed around train stations along the FEC railroad; and

WHEREAS, local governments and the private sector along Florida's east coast are currently implementing programs to redevelop historic downtowns built around train stations; and

WHEREAS, improved mobility is highly desired in Brevard County/Merritt Island and throughout the State of Florida; and

WHEREAS, transit, including rail transit, is a key component of improved mobility, especially between cities and throughout the Florida's east coast; and

WHEREAS, the 2006 Florida Rail Plan identifies passenger transit along the FEC corridor as a potential "Coastal Route" for new passenger rail service in the State of Florida as part of Florida's statewide transportation network; and

WHEREAS, Amtrak is well-suited to provide passenger rail service along Florida's east coast; and

WHEREAS, the reintroduction of Amtrak service along Florida's east coast would provide near-term jobs and economic stimulus for Florida's residents and businesses; and

WHEREAS, the Federal Government is seeking appropriate projects for inclusion in the Federal economic stimulus package to provide immediate and near-term job opportunities for projects; and

WHEREAS, the Intercity FEC Corridor Project (Jacksonville/Miami) is an appropriate project for inclusion by the State of Florida in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Plan; and

WHEREAS, former work by Amtrak and FDOT includes plans for the improvements necessary to initiate Amtrak service on the FEC corridor;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

The Merritt Island Redevelopment Agency strongly supports the Intercity FEC Corridor Project and the reintroduction of passenger transit on the FEC Rail Corridor, specifically in the form of Amtrak, from Jacksonville to Miami; and


The Merritt Island Redevelopment Agency requests the assistance of Governor Crist and FDOT Secretary Kopelousos to prioritize the Amtrak/FEC Corridor Project (from Jacksonville to Miami) as part of the Federal economic stimulus package for the State of Florida and as part of Florida's statewide transportation network.

The Chair thereupon declared the Resolution duly passed and adopted this 24th day of September 2009.

Merritt Island Redevelopment Agency
Board of Directors of Brevard County, Fl

Attest:


Sue Nisbet-Lawrence, Chairperson


Cheryl J. Hurren, Special Projects Coordinator

As approved by the Board of Directors on September 24, 2009