

Reso.

2016-0245

INTRODUCED BY: LARRY COCHRAN, PARISH PRESIDENT

RESOLUTION NO. 6232

A resolution supporting restoration of passenger rail service between New Orleans, Louisiana and Orlando, Florida.

- WHEREAS,** before Hurricane Katrina, Amtrak's *Sunset Limited* passenger line was the only transcontinental passenger rail service from Los Angeles passing through New Orleans to Orlando; and,
- WHEREAS,** Hurricane Katrina damaged a portion of the rail infrastructure along the Gulf Coast as well as caused the loss of other portions of the infrastructure, including the total loss of the passenger rail terminal facility in Mobile, AL, and the main line rail bridge between Bay St. Louis and Gulfport, MS; and,
- WHEREAS,** Amtrak suspended all service on the eastern portion of the *Sunset Limited* line from New Orleans through Bay St. Louis, Gulfport, Biloxi, Pascagoula, Mobile, Atmore, Pensacola, Crestview, Chipley, Tallahassee, Madison, Lake City, and Jacksonville to Orlando; and,
- WHEREAS,** CSX Transportation, and Norfolk Southern (the freight railroad companies that own the tracks on which Gulf Coast passenger rail service will operate) have both committed to cooperating with Amtrak in providing this vital service across the Gulf Coast and to do so in a more efficient manner than prior to Hurricane Katrina; and,
- WHEREAS,** restoration of passenger rail service to the eastern Gulf Coast will facilitate job creation through development opportunities, enhance tourism, and reduce environmental and roadway impacts due to personal automobile use, thereby having a positive economic and environmental impact to the coastal states of Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, and Florida; and,
- WHEREAS,** communities not directly located on the suspended route, and citizens which have limited transportation access, options or physical challenges will be greatly served through an available long distance intercity passenger rail service within reasonable driving distance that provides links to the regional and national intermodal transportation system; and,
- WHEREAS,** such resumption of passenger rail service will also benefit the entire nation by providing a link to the Gulf Coast from the Midwest and West Coast; and,
- WHEREAS,** the Passenger Rail Investment and Improvement Act of 2008 called for Amtrak to study the potential return of passenger rail service from New Orleans to Orlando; and,
- WHEREAS,** Section 11304 of Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act (or "FAST Act") of 2015 mandates the Federal Railroad Administration to convene a working group to evaluate the restoration of intercity rail passenger services in the Gulf Coast region between New Orleans, Louisiana and Orlando, Florida and to submit findings by September 2016.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, THAT WE, THE MEMBERS OF THE ST. CHARLES PARISH COUNCIL, do hereby recommend and support the restoration of dependable, daily passenger rail service along the suspended route between New Orleans, Louisiana and Orlando, Florida.

The foregoing resolution having been submitted to a vote, the vote thereon was as follows:

YEAS: BENEDETTO, HOGAN, WILSON, CLULEE, GIBBS, WOODRUFF,
 BELLOCK, FLETCHER, FISHER-PERRIER
NAYS: NONE
ABSENT: NONE

And the resolution was declared adopted this 20th day of June, 2016, to become effective five (5) days after publication in the Official Journal.

CHAIRMAN: Wesley Benvenuto

SECRETARY: [Signature]

DLVD/PARISH PRESIDENT: 6/22/16

APPROVED: _____ DISAPPROVED: _____

PARISH PRESIDENT: [Signature]

REC'D/SECRETARY: 6/23/16

AT: [Signature] RECD BY: [Signature]