

RESOLUTION 2016-05

**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 served railroad travelers as the only transcontinental passenger rail service from Los Angeles, CA passing through New Orleans, LA and Mobile, AL to Orlando, FL: 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 Mobile's passenger rail terminal facility: and

WHEREAS, Amtrak suspended all service on the eastern portion of the *Sunset Limited* line from New Orleans, LA through Mobile, AL, Pensacola, FL, Crestview, FL, Chipley, FL, Tallahassee, FL and Jacksonville to Orlando, FL; and

WHEREAS, CSX and Norfolk Southern (the freight railroad companies that own the tracks on which passenger rail service on the Gulf Coast will operate) have both committed to cooperating with Amtrak in providing this vital service along the eastern 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, 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, Louisiana to Orlando, Florida;

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 with a designated stop in DeFuniak Springs, Florida;


WHEREAS, the DeFuniak Springs, Florida designated stop would provide an additional stop from New Orleans, Louisiana to Orlando, Florida, thus providing an attractive depot and historic environment for passengers, a direct access to south Walton County beaches, and south Alabama communities; and

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the DeFuniak Springs City Council members hereby recommends and supports the restoration of a dependable, daily passenger rail service along the suspended route between New Orleans, Louisiana and Orlando, Florida with a designated stop in Historic DeFuniak Springs, Florida.

Passed and duly adopted by the DeFuniak Springs City Council on this 27th day of June, 2016.

CITY OF DeFuniak Springs


Mayor Robert "Bob" Campbell


Loretta A Laird, City Clerk