

July 8, 2014

Governor Rick Scott
State of Florida
The Capitol
400 S. Monroe Street
Tallahassee, FL 32399

Dear Governor Scott:

Citizens Against Rail Expansion in Florida (CARE FL) very much appreciates some of the sentiments in your June 9 letter to All Aboard Florida (AAF) President Michael Reininger. Notably, you asked AAF to, "...please be sensitive to the impact of additional rail traffic in the rail corridor to our communities, their home values and public safety." You also urged AAF—clearly and directly—to give communities more time to ask questions and get answers about the expansion of rail services.

As longtime residents who live in and around areas that would be impacted by AAF, perhaps dramatically, we were most pleased by the thoughtful tone of these directions and statements.

But we have significant concerns.

As you may know, CARE FL is a new coalition comprised of community groups located along Florida's Treasure Coast, and we have significant concerns about the proposed AAF high-speed passenger rail project and the related Florida East Coast Railway (FEC) freight rail expansion. As the highest elected official of our great state, Governor Scott, we fully—and respectfully—expect you to not just consider our concerns, but to respond in a thoughtful and open fashion in keeping with the charge of your office and the expectation of Florida voters.

Like many concerned citizens across the state, we are eagerly awaiting the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) from the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) and the opportunity it presents to submit formal comments in response. In the meantime, we want to highlight our safety-related concerns, which stem from the proposed increase in both the number and the length of freight trains passing through our communities each day, as well as the speed of the proposed high-speed passenger trains.

The additional freight traffic is troubling enough, but when you pile on the question of whether and how communities will be able to ensure the safety of motorists and pedestrians at grade crossings, or first-responder accessibility—a huge issue for all of the impacted communities—every minute truly counts.

We are likewise concerned about environmental impacts and disruption of maritime traffic and commerce, which also has implications for quality of life in the affected communities. Decreased property values and increased noise—both likely fallouts of these rail projects—are also concerns, and again cut to the heart and soul of our basic concern: quality of life.

To be sure, and as you have publicly articulated, these rail projects have potential benefits. But that also begs a fundamental question: For how many, and at what cost? Not just financially—though this, too, is a looming issue—but in terms of the quality of life that that we currently expect and enjoy as Floridians.

On the question of financing, we have many questions.

For example: The proposed AAF plan has been publicly described by your office as a private sector venture, but it is also a fact that many costs may be passed along directly to local communities. And while we agree with you that the proposed project must comply with the FRA's safety requirements at grade crossings, we do not believe it is appropriate—or feasible—for our communities to absorb or offset project-related costs using taxpayer dollars for this, or any, private sector venture.

And if this is truly not a private-sector venture, but a hybrid that relies on community funding, at least tangentially, then let's talk about that openly and honestly so that Floridians can understand—clearly and up front—exactly what those costs are, and who, precisely, is expected to pay for them.

On one point, at least, we do agree with you wholeheartedly: Citizens' concerns about these rail projects *must* be addressed, thoughtfully, promptly and openly.

In that spirit, CARE FL will be contacting your office shortly in hopes of setting up a meeting with you or your staff, so that we may discuss our concerns in detail.

Thank you for your time, and consideration.

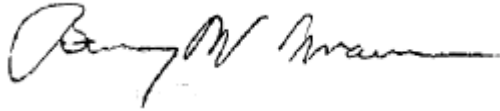
Sincerely,



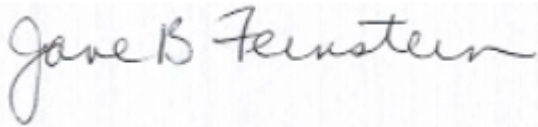
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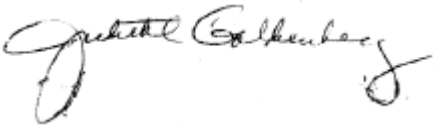
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Current CARE FL groups: Mariner Sands Country Club in Stuart, FL; Loblolly in Hobe Sound, FL; Frenchman's Creek Beach and Country Club in Palm Beach Gardens, FL; The Club at Admiral's Cove in Jupiter, FL; and Jonathan's Landing in Jupiter, FL.