

FLORIDA TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

Ron Howse, Chairman
Jay Trumbull, Vice-Chairman
John Browning
Richard Burke
Julius Davis
David Genson
Teresa Sarnoff



Ron DeSantis
Governor

November 4, 2019

Kevin J. Thibault, P.E., Secretary
Florida Department of Transportation
605 Suwannee Street, MS 57
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0450

Re: Rail Safety Concerns

Dear Secretary Thibault:

Thank you for your leadership since returning to the Department in January of this year. Your dedication to the success of Florida's transportation network is evident as you daily lead the Florida Department of Transportation through this time of extraordinary growth and expansion of the State's population and roadway system.

The mission of the Florida Transportation Commission (FTC) is to provide leadership in meeting Florida's transportation needs through policy guidance on issues of statewide importance and by maintaining oversight and public accountability for the Department of Transportation and other statutorily specified transportation authorities. As such, the Commission is interested in any, and all, transportation issues pertaining to our mission.

An issue of statewide importance is the safety of all users of the transportation facilities across the state. Recently, the FTC has been made aware of concerns from citizen advocacy groups related to rail safety in the state. Florida Department of Transportation's role in oversight of passenger rail with respect to maintenance, safety, revitalization, and expansion is subject to the concerns raised.

The FTC is aware of the 2018 General Appropriations Act, which directed the Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability (OPPAGA) to contract with

November 4, 2019
Re: Rail Safety Concerns
Page Two

an independent consultant to study existing and planned passenger rail, including high speed passenger rail, in the state.

In order for the FTC to respond appropriately to the concerns raised, please provide the Department's response to the findings and recommendations of the OPPAGA report, including all related activities and responses to the OPPAGA report. Furthermore, please provide the detailed responses to inquiries the Department received related to rail safety concerns over the past 12 months.

Sincerely,



Ron Howse, Chairman
Florida Transportation Commission