



March 3, 2009

Mr. Todd Stennis
Amtrak, Office of Government Affairs
60 Massachusetts Ave, NE
Fourth Floor
Washington, DC 20002

**BOARD OF
COUNTY COMMISSIONERS**

Dear Mr. Stennis:

The Wakulla County Board of County Commissioners voted unanimously to support the provision of a feasibility study on restoring Sunset Limited service between New Orleans and Sanford as identified in the 2008 Amtrak Reauthorization Bill.

Wakulla County is a rural and emerging county in north Florida which prides itself on promoting ecotourism and a green economy. Numerous federal, state and local forestry, wildlife and aqua cultural amenities and activities, of global significance, are present within our county's borders. As such, conservation (of all kinds, including that of energy) is always a top County priority.

Rail connectivity to both Sanford and New Orleans expands the market for offering tour packages, excursions and visitor experiences thus enhancing economic development for communities along the route. Restoration of this service to Florida provides a much-needed alternative to driving and flying to and from these areas with resultant energy savings.

Amtrak provides a unique American travel experience to many of the lower south's best travel destinations especially Florida's Great Northwest, Florida's Nature Coast, Tallahassee, Florida's capital, and the panhandle region. Wakulla County, along with many other counties in the Florida Panhandle, has experienced significant increases in population. Restoring Amtrak travel to our region will have long ranging positive economic impacts. Amtrak travel will not only allow better access for visiting citizens to our area, but also will facilitate the movement our of citizens to New Orleans and other destinations for weekend visits and longer vacations.

The Wakulla Board of County Commissioners looks forward to working in partnership with our regional partners and with Amtrak for the benefit and enrichment of our entire region. Should there be anything we can do to help achieve a successful outcome, please let us know.

Sincerely,

Howard Kessler, MD
Chairman

cc: Honorable Brian Desloge, Chairman, Leon County Board of County Commissioners
Honorable John Marks, Mayor, City of Tallahassee
Members of the Capital Area Regional Partnership
Members of Regional Chambers of Commerce

Alan Brock
District 1

George Green
Vice-Chairman
District 2

Mike Stewart
District 3

Howard W. Kessler, M.D.
Chairman
District 4

Lynn Artz
District 5

Benjamin H. Pingree
County Administrator

Ronald A. Mowrey
County Attorney
(850) 222-9482

Board of County
Commissioners
3093 Crawfordville Hwy.
Post Office Box 1263
Crawfordville, FL 32326
(850) 926-0919
(850) 926-0940 FAX