



Saturday, November 24, 2018

Dear CARE FL Members and Supporters,

For over four years, we have all stood together as a community united to protect the residents of the Treasure Coast region and northern Palm Beach County from the impact of rail expansion, including All Aboard Florida/ Brightline's high-speed rail project.

After years of contention, Martin County and Indian River County recently engaged in discussions with Brightline, in hopes of reaching a responsible settlement agreement that would address many of the safety, fiscal, and maritime concerns that CARE FL has highlighted over the years.

On November 20, both the Martin County Board of County Commissioners and the Indian River County Board of County Commissioners held meetings to consider and vote on this agreement. Martin County voted to enter into a detailed settlement agreement with Brightline that addresses many of the safety, fiscal, and maritime concerns. However, Indian River County voted to continue its legal and political fight against Brightline, rejecting the terms of the agreement. CARE FL acknowledges the tireless efforts of Indian River County and wishes them well.

CARE FL has chosen to join Martin County and accept the agreement.

Under the agreement, the residents of our communities, could save tens of millions of dollars—local dollars that Martin County would have otherwise had to spend on safety and maintenance costs associated with the Brightline rail project.

Under the agreement, Brightline commits to the following:

Significant Safety Enhancements. The agreement includes a number of provisions that will address public safety. Brightline has committed to extensive safety improvements, including the installation of safety equipment (such as vehicle presence detection and quad gates) that are not required by the Federal Railroad Administration and the addition of sidewalks within the right-of-way. Brightline will pay 100% of these installation costs. In addition, Brightline has agreed to spend \$1 million on fencing and has committed to build a pedestrian bridge in Martin County, with the costs split 50/50 between the railroad and Martin County. Further, the agreement requires Brightline to promptly contact local first responders regarding accidents, to conduct an annual review of all accidents and collisions, and to work with Martin County to address and prevent such accidents in the future.

Quiet Zones. The agreement provides that Martin County will qualify for Quiet Zone designations based on the railroad improvements, should the County choose to apply for such designations. The agreement also provides that Jupiter and Palm Beach Gardens, in northern Palm Beach County, will qualify for quiet zones should they choose to apply for such designations.

Substantial Cost Savings for our Communities. Brightline has agreed to cover the increased maintenance costs associated with the project in Martin County for 14 years (two life cycles of the equipment). In addition, Brightline has agreed that in the years immediately beyond year 14, Martin County will pay an average of Brightline's maintenance costs over the final years of the 14-year agreement. This is important because it prevents Brightline from delaying needed maintenance until after year 14. This commitment applies to Martin County and—because of its adjacency to Martin County and inclusion of the Loxahatchee rail bridge—the Town of Jupiter in northern Palm Beach County.

Guaranteed Train Station(s) in the Treasure Coast. As part of the agreement, Brightline is now required to build at least one station in the Treasure Coast. Brightline agrees to pay for at least 50% of the costs of such station(s).

Enhanced Maritime Navigability. With respect to our maritime community, the agreement ensures that mariners have reliable access to the waterways. In every four-hour period, the Loxahatchee and St. Lucie rail bridges will be open for two hours total and closed for two hours total, to ensure waterway accessibility for two of every four hours. In addition, the St. Lucie rail bridge will be open the same 15 minutes of every hour throughout the day and a bridge tender—paid for by Brightline—will be present to ensure additional reliability for the maritime community. These conditions must be approved by the Coast Guard.

CARE FL does not believe this is a perfect agreement, but we believe it is a responsible one, and it demonstrates that our efforts have finally led Brightline to address long standing community concerns. The agreement is also enforceable, and we are confident that our County leaders, and CARE FL will ensure that Brightline adheres to the terms of the deal.

CARE will continue to operate for an extended time period for essential purposes to ensure that Brightline adheres to its promises and responsibilities. Trust is an essential ingredient in being a good neighbor, and All Aboard Florida, Brightline, Virgin, or any name it calls itself in the future, must prove by its actions that it is a good neighbor and that it is committed to the agreement. Signing an agreement is necessary, but living up to it is critical. We will be watching.

Additionally, there are specific milestones to monitor and work on. For instance, we will be engaging in the near future with the Coast Guard, Brightline, local governments and

Florida East Coast Rail (which is not a part of this agreement) regarding operating rules for the Loxahatchee and St. Lucie bridges.

Members, but for your steadfast commitment to protecting our residents and community, this train would have been running completely unchecked through our region several years ago, instead of in 2022, if it is built.

Through a sophisticated legal, political, and public awareness campaign that you funded, we were able to elevate this issue from our neighborhoods to the halls of Congress and to the state capitol and federal courthouses. Together, our community pushed back and shined a light on real concerns related to public safety, our maritime industry, the aging bridges, and our way of life.

None of this would have been possible without the support of every resident in the region who contributed to our effort. We again recognize the efforts of countless local, state, and federal elected officials who carried the issue torch for us, and who will need to remain vigilant ensuring Brightline lives up to the agreement.

Whether it was through letters from our federal officials questioning Brightline's financial and safety impacts on our communities, or our state lawmakers who proposed rail safety measures, or our local officials and residents who funded our legal efforts – we did this together, and we have now achieved significant benefits from Brightline because of our hard-fought efforts.

Thank you again,

Brent Hanlon
Chairman, CARE FL Steering Committee