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FMCS Congratulates Parties in Resolving Gulf Coast Rail Dispute

WASHINGTON, D.C. (Nov. 25, 2022) – The Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service (FMCS) congratulates Amtrak, CSX Transportation, Norfolk Southern and the Port of Mobile (Ala.) on their Nov. 22 agreement, ending more than six years of challenging negotiations.

The parties began mediation with FMCS in June after the dispute was brought before the Surface Transportation Board (STB) in 2021. The agreement brings the Gulf Coast one step closer to the restoration and expansion of passenger rail service between New Orleans and Mobile almost two decades after Hurricane Katrina caused a major disruption to the region’s rail infrastructure.

“FMCS extends our congratulations to each of the parties and their leadership for their steadfast determination in coming to an agreement,” FMCS Acting Director Greg Goldstein said. “FMCS is pleased we were able to assist in what has been considered by many to be a trying and contentious dispute.”

FMCS Commissioners Dave Moora and Brenda Pryor, along with Ron Molteni and Bob Granatelli from the STB, were appointed to mediate the case and helped lead the parties to a resolution just eight days prior to a scheduled final Nov. 30 hearing before the STB.

“It was evident that Amtrak, the host railroads, and the Port of Mobile were committed to their engagement in the process and showed good-faith throughout our work with them,” said Moora. “It’s really an incredible feeling any time an agreement can be reached, and especially one with such a considerable public benefit and impact on the economy.”

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The U.S. Federal Mediation & Conciliation Service (FMCS) is the nation’s premier public agency for dispute resolution and conflict management. FMCS was created by Congress as a neutral and independent government agency upon enactment of the Labor-Management Relations Act of 1947 (Taft-Hartley Act) and mandated to resolve industrial conflict and promote labor-management peace and cooperation, minimizing the impact of these disputes on the free flow of commerce. With headquarters in Washington, D.C. and offices across the country, the agency has a proud track record of decades of effective dispute resolution and conflict management services for employers and unions across industries and work activities in the private, public, and federal sectors. FMCS is also recognized for its success facilitating negotiated rulemaking processes and for its robust employment mediation program in the federal sector as well as its global program, partnering with more than 60 countries to provide international consulting and training. For more on FMCS or to request services, visit www.fmcs.gov