



## Texas Department of Transportation

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August 15, 2008

Mr. Bill Holloway  
Texas Director  
Northern Flyer Alliance  
3105 Glen Ora Street, No.4  
Austin, Texas 78704

File: TPP (M)  
486-5127

Dear Mr. Holloway:

Thank you for your letter of July 29, 2008 to our Deputy Executive Director Steve Simmons. Mr. Simmons has asked me to respond. We appreciate your effort to provide the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) with information regarding possible federal funding sources for passenger rail projects. As you may be aware, TxDOT has provided funding for fiscal years 2007 and 2008 to assist in the support of Amtrak's Heartland Flyer service between Fort Worth and Oklahoma City.

TxDOT has submitted an application for funding under the Federal Railroad Administration's (FRA) Capital Assistance to States Interstate Passenger Rail Service Program for improvements to the Trinity Railway Express (TRE) corridor between Dallas and Fort Worth. These improvements would result in more efficient operations for TRE and would enable the rerouting of Amtrak trains from the current Union Pacific alignment, which takes them through Tower 55. Tower 55 is one of the most congested rail to rail intersections in the nation. Relieving congestion at Tower 55 indirectly benefits the Heartland Flyer.

As part of our due-diligence process in supporting the Heartland Flyer route, TxDOT has reviewed the condition of the infrastructure and operations on the route. Discussions with BNSF have determined that the costs associated with increasing the track speed for passenger trains from 55 mph to mostly 79 mph on the Fort Worth Subdivision (Gainesville to Fort Worth) is approximately \$3.1 million. This preliminary estimate includes signal and track work.

TxDOT does not currently have a dedicated source of funds for rail projects. We must therefore carefully evaluate non-highway projects. In the case of the Heartland Flyer, further study is needed to identify why users ride the Heartland Flyer. This information may come from a study being funded by the Southwest Region University Transportation Center.

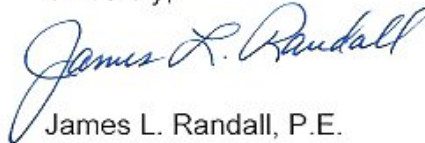
Mr. Bill Holloway

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Thank you for your time and interest in the Heartland Flyer route. We appreciate your interest and support of passenger rail in Texas. If you have any questions, please contact Jennifer Moczygemba at 486-5127 or by email at [jmoczyg@dot.state.tx.us](mailto:jmoczyg@dot.state.tx.us).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "James L. Randall". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "J".

James L. Randall, P.E.  
Director, Transportation  
Planning and Programming

cc: Steven E. Simmons, P.E., Deputy Executive Director, TxDOT  
Jennifer Moczygemba, P.E., Transportation Planning and Programming Division,  
TxDOT