



Norfolk Southern Corporation
650 W. Peachtree Street NW
Atlanta, GA 30308
Telephone: 828-490-6813
Email: david.lehlbach@nscorp.com

David Lehlbach
Assistant Vice President
Strategic Planning

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The Honorable Sean P. Duffy
Secretary of Transportation
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary Duffy:

On behalf of Norfolk Southern (NS), I am pleased to express our support for the Alabama Port Authority's (APA) New Horizons Project, submitted to the Federal Railroad Administration's (FRA) Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvements (CRISI) grant program for Fiscal Years 2025–2026.

NS serves as a critical Class I partner to the Port of Mobile's TASD railroad, partnering to move freight efficiently between global markets and key domestic destinations across the Southeast and Midwest. As freight demand continues to grow, the efficiency, reliability, and capacity of port-connected rail infrastructure are increasingly vital to maintaining a resilient supply chain network.

The New Horizons Project represents a strategic investment in the modernization and expansion of APA's rail operations. The proposed improvements, including new track construction, yard automation, and associated infrastructure upgrades—will significantly enhance throughput, reduce congestion, and improve operational safety within the port rail system. These enhancements will directly benefit Norfolk Southern operations by enabling more fluid interchange, reducing dwell times, and supporting more reliable service for our shared customers.

Additionally, this project aligns with national freight priorities by addressing critical short line capacity constraints identified in the U.S. DOT's National Freight Strategic Plan. By improving last-mile connectivity and eliminating bottlenecks within the port, the project strengthens the overall freight network and supports economic growth across the region and beyond.

I am pleased to express NS' support for this comprehensive infrastructure project and respectfully request its selection for a FRA CRISI grant.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David Lehlbach", written in a cursive style.

David Lehlbach