

ALL ABOARD FLORIDA TO CREATE JOBS & BRING \$915 MILLION IN ECONOMIC BENEFITS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE -

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TALLAHASSEE, Fla. -

The Sunshine State is growing at a rapid rate. With a larger population, Floridians should expect more traffic congestion; however, [a new report](#) from the state's independent, nonpartisan, nonprofit public policy research institute, Florida TaxWatch, shows that All Aboard Florida could not only solve this potential issue but is projected to benefit the state's economy by more than \$915 million.

According to the report, All Aboard Florida's express train service, Brightline, will divert an estimated 1.5 million passengers annually from congested roadways, and is consistent with the state intermodal transportation system plans. In addition, the express train is projected to create 1,100 new jobs which will generate \$294 million in labor income through the year 2021.

While this seems like a viable solution, Brightline has not been welcomed with open arms. The Treasure Coast region has raised concerns about safety and how the rail will affect local revenue since the train will be speeding through with no stopping points. The region has spent more than \$6.8 million in taxpayer money on lawsuits against Brightline thus far, and continues to spend taxpayer money to derail the project.

"Public officials should use caution when spending taxpayer money to fund unwise lawsuits, especially when reasonable compromises that would benefit everyone are available," says Florida TaxWatch President & CEO Dominic M. Calabro. "A privately-funded rail system that creates jobs and benefits Florida's economy and environment is in the best interest of the state. In order to continue our role as a leading tourist destination, we must encourage projects like All Aboard Florida that will preserve our beautiful state without the taxpayers footing the bill."

It's not too late for both parties to settle on an agreement. All Aboard Florida could establish a Brightline stop somewhere in the region that will allow for the Treasure Coast to benefit from the rail, but that will depend on if the stop will interfere with the estimated 3-hour travel time.

"I applaud Florida TaxWatch for their comprehensive critical analysis of taxpayer funded attempts to stop a much needed private rail system," Says Henry U. Parrish III, Mayor of the City of Cocoa. "Brightline's passenger rail is just as important to our state now as it was in Henry Flagler's time. Brightline will serve this critical need without asking the public to subsidize it."

Florida TaxWatch has stressed the importance of [transportation funding](#) for projects that relieve congestion, lessen gas consumption, and improve road safety. This privately-funded project should be encouraged, rather than discouraged, and parties should pursue a settlement rather than hold up progress with endless lawsuits.

Read the full report on All Aboard Florida [here](#).

About Florida TaxWatch

As an independent, nonpartisan, nonprofit taxpayer research institute & government watchdog for nearly forty years, Florida TaxWatch works to improve the productivity and accountability of Florida government. Its research recommends productivity enhancements and explains the statewide impact of fiscal and economic policies and practices on citizens and businesses.

Florida TaxWatch is supported by voluntary, tax-deductible donations and private grants, and does not accept government funding. Donations provide a solid, lasting foundation that has enabled Florida TaxWatch to bring about a more effective, responsive government that is more accountable to, and productive for, the citizens it serves since 1979. For more information, please visit <http://www.floridataxwatch.org>.