



NEW HANOVER COUNTY

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

230 Government Center Drive, Suite 175, Wilmington, NC 28403

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August 13, 2019

Bobby Lewis, Chief Operating Officer
N.C. Department of Transportation
1501 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699-1501

Dear Mr. Lewis:

On behalf of the New Hanover County Board of Commissioners, I write in support of the City of Wilmington's efforts to realign rail service around the city. New Hanover County and the City of Wilmington are experiencing tremendous growth, with expectations that our population will increase by as much as 50 percent over the next two decades. In addition, the Port of Wilmington is continuing to expand to accommodate more cargo and container traffic that relies on truck and rail service to move goods.

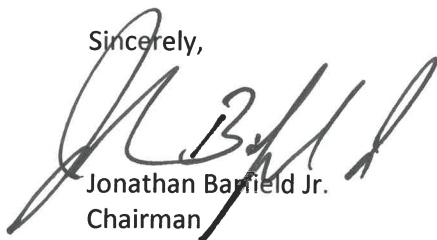
While that growth brings economic prosperity to the region, it necessarily requires us to plan for transportation needs into the future. Currently, rail service into and out of the port crosses more than 30 roads through the heart of the City of Wilmington. Many of these roads carry tens of thousands of vehicles per day, as the rail lines cross through some of the densest parts of the city.

This already results in traffic delays, but with the port's continued growth comes the expectation that future trains could be twice as long – as much as 10,000 feet in length. This could exacerbate already lengthy traffic delays.

The City of Wilmington is spearheading a plan that would take rail traffic across the Cape Fear River and through primarily undeveloped portions of Brunswick County. This could result not only in far more efficient and faster service for cargo and containers, but provide for a better flow of traffic through Wilmington and New Hanover County.

We support the City of Wilmington's efforts in this endeavor.

Sincerely,



Jonathan Barfield Jr.
Chairman

cc: Karen Collette, Division Engineer