

RESOLUTION

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF OKLAHOMA CITY URGING THE OKLAHOMA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION AND THE STATE OF OKLAHOMA TO RETAIN OWNERSHIP OF THE SOONER SUBDIVISION RAIL LINE FOR CURRENT AND FUTURE PASSENGER RAIL TRANSPORTATION OPPORTUNITIES, AND FOR THE ECONOMIC AND QUALITY OF LIFE BENEFITS DERIVED THEREFROM, FOR THE CITIZENS, BUSINESSES, CITIES AND TOWNS OF THE STATE OF OKLAHOMA.

WHEREAS, the Oklahoma Department of Transportation (ODOT) is a multi-modal transportation agency whose mission is to provide a safe, economical and effective transportation network for the people, commerce and communities of Oklahoma; and

WHEREAS, the Sooner Subdivision Rail Line (Sooner Sub) is owned by the State of Oklahoma and is a part of the former Frisco Rail Line (Frisco Line) located between the great cities of Oklahoma City and Tulsa, Oklahoma; and

WHEREAS, the Frisco Line once served to provide valuable passenger rail transportation service and economic benefits for the citizens of Oklahoma by linking the cities of Oklahoma City and Tulsa together and with other cities outside the State of Oklahoma; and

WHEREAS, numerous cities across the United States, including the cities of Oklahoma City and Tulsa, have determined that local rail transit and intercity and interstate passenger rail transportation is a critical and necessary component of modern 21st Century multimodal transportation systems and a vital driver of economic development activity; and

WHEREAS, the 2014 Joint Legislative Agenda of the Greater Oklahoma City Chamber of Commerce and the Tulsa Metro Chamber of Commerce supports the continued study and development of passenger rail service between Tulsa and Oklahoma City to enhance connectivity throughout the region and serve as a catalyst for greater access to tourist attractions and destinations; and

WHEREAS, the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) has designated the corridor between Oklahoma City and Tulsa as part of major passenger rail transportation corridor for the South Central United States; and

WHEREAS, on April 21, 2011, Oklahoma Governor Mary Fallin approved House Bill 1686 creating the Eastern Flyer Passenger Rail Development Task Force to study and develop a comprehensive plan for developing passenger rail service between Oklahoma City and Tulsa; and

WHEREAS, on December 7, 2012 the State of Oklahoma's Eastern Flyer Passenger Rail Development Task Force issued its final report setting forth a solid framework for moving forward with plans to institute passenger rail service between Oklahoma City and Tulsa; and

WHEREAS, in November 2012, ODOT commenced a major 2-year, \$5 million Passenger Rail Corridor Investment Plan Study that is funded by federal government and overseen by the FRA and includes preparation of a Service Development Plan and Environmental Impact Statement to determine a preferred alternative for establishing passenger rail service between Tulsa and Oklahoma City; and

WHEREAS, the Sooner Sub is under a long-term lease agreement between ODOT and South Kansas and Oklahoma Railroad (SKO), a division of Watco Companies (WATCO), for which the State of Oklahoma receives \$500,000 annually from SKO under the terms of the agreement; and

WHEREAS, SKO provides economically important freight rail service for numerous Oklahoma businesses along the Sooner Sub and has invested millions of dollars in rail infrastructure improvements along the line; and

WHEREAS, Iowa Pacific Holdings (IPH), in partnership with WATCO, has announced the initiation of trial passenger rail service for the Eastern Flyer on the Sooner Sub between Tulsa and Oklahoma City during February 2014; and

WHEREAS, IPH has announced that all 900 available tickets for the three initial Eastern Flyer passenger rail excursion trains between Tulsa and Oklahoma City have sold out; and

WHEREAS, ODOT has recently published a Request for Proposal on the Sale of the Sooner Subdivision and is soliciting bids through January 30, 2014 and intends to sell the Sooner Sub to the highest bidder; and

WHEREAS, numerous cities and towns throughout the State of Oklahoma and many of their residents and state legislators support development of passenger rail service between Oklahoma City and Tulsa and are opposed to ODOT's proposed sale of the Sooner Sub; and

WHEREAS, the City of Oklahoma City is opposed to ODOT's proposed sale of the Sooner Sub and believes its transfer to private industry would be detrimental to the development of affordable and effective passenger rail service between Oklahoma City and Tulsa.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that The City of Oklahoma City urges the Oklahoma Department of Transportation and the State of Oklahoma to retain ownership of the Sooner Sub for current and future passenger rail transportation opportunities, and for the economic and quality of life benefits derived there from, for all of the citizens, businesses, cities and towns of the State of Oklahoma.

ADOPTED by the Council and **SIGNED** by the Mayor of The City of Oklahoma
City this _____ day of _____, 2014

ATTEST:

CITY CLERK

MAYOR

REVIEWED for form and legality.



Assistant Municipal Counselor