



Polk Transportation
Planning Organization

Polk TPO

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February 2, 2026

The Honorable David Fink
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave, SE W-32
Washington, DC 20590, United States

RE: Letter of Support for the Statewide Advancement of Feature Enhancements at Intercity Passenger Rail Crossings (SAFE-IPR) Program

Dear Administrator Fink,

On behalf of the Polk TPO, I am pleased to express our strong support for the Florida Department of Transportation's (FDOT) application to the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) under the Federal-State Partnership for Intercity Passenger Rail (FSP) Grant Program for the Statewide Advancement of Feature Enhancements at Intercity Passenger Rail Crossings (SAFE-IPR) Program.

This initiative aligns closely with the strategic priorities of the U.S. Department of Transportation and FRA by advancing investments that improve safety, enhance state of good repair, strengthen system durability, and modernize critical transportation infrastructure. From a local government perspective, the SAFE-IPR Program also supports improved system operations by reducing delays and improving travel time reliability for intercity passenger rail service operating through our community.

The SAFE-IPR Program's statewide, programmatic approach to implementing safety countermeasures at 910 intercity passenger rail crossings, of which 79 lie within the Polk County jurisdiction, reflects a comprehensive and coordinated strategy for addressing safety risks that affect communities across Florida. Proposed improvements, including upgraded traffic control devices, enhanced pedestrian treatments, improved lighting, and revised approach geometries, will help reduce safety risks at crossings while improving the movement of people and goods, emergency response operations, and quality of life for residents, visitors, and businesses within Polk County. The Polk TPO understands that as improvements are advanced, Polk County will work with FDOT to address financial commitments and to facilitate access to municipal right-of-way, as needed, to support timely and efficient program implementation.

The Polk TPO supports the SAFE-IPR Program and believes it will play a critical role in advancing a safer, more reliable, and more resilient transportation system at both the local and statewide levels. The Polk TPO wishes to express our dedication to comprehensive rail improvements. We appreciate FDOT's leadership in advancing this effort and look forward to continued coordination with the Department and project partners as safety improvements are implemented at crossing locations within our jurisdiction.

Sincerely,

Ryan Kordek, Executive Director
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