

PROPOSED

RESOLUTION NO.

1 A RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF BROWARD
2 COUNTY, FLORIDA, URGING THE FLORIDA LEGISLATURE TO APPROPRIATE
3 FUNDING FOR THE FLORIDA RAIL ENTERPRISE PROGRAM TO FUND THE SOUTH
4 FLORIDA REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY'S TRI-RAIL OPERATIONS TO
5 MAINTAIN TRI-RAIL'S LEVEL OF SERVICE; URGING THE FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF
6 TRANSPORTATION (FDOT) TO INCLUDE SUCH FUNDING, AS MAY BE NECESSARY, IN
7 THE APPROPRIATE CURRENT AND FUTURE FDOT FIVE-YEAR WORK PROGRAMS;
8 AND PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY AND AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

9 (Sponsored by Commissioner Lamar P. Fisher)

10
11 WHEREAS, safe, efficient, and connected public transportation is a cornerstone of a
12 successful metropolitan region, supporting economic growth, sustainability, and a high quality
13 of life for residents;

14 WHEREAS, South Florida has made progress toward becoming a competitive global
15 metropolitan area, with planned investments in regional mobility playing a key role in
16 achieving that progress;

17 WHEREAS, the South Florida region continues to grow in population, increasing the
18 need for improved rail transit options;

19 WHEREAS, on June 30, 2025, Governor DeSantis signed HB 7031 into law,
20 approving a \$1.3 billion tax package that includes significant changes impacting state and
21 local funding for transit;

22 WHEREAS, HB 7031 includes a provision that revises the distribution from
23 documentary stamp tax revenues to eliminate the Florida Rail Enterprise Program;

24 WHEREAS, the elimination of the funding distribution for the Florida Rail Enterprise
25 Program has a significant negative financial impact on the operation of the South Florida
26 Regional Transportation Authority ("SFRTA") commuter rail service known as Tri-Rail;

27 WHEREAS, Tri-Rail operates along 72 miles of the South Florida Rail Corridor
28 ("SFRC") and eight miles of the Florida East Coast Railway ("FECR") in Miami-Dade,
29 Broward, and Palm Beach counties;

30 WHEREAS, the SFRTA plays a critical role in serving the public by providing a safe,
31 affordable, and accessible regional transportation option that thousands of residents,
32 workers, and visitors rely on each day to commute across Miami-Dade, Broward, and Palm
33 Beach counties;

34 WHEREAS, the SFRTA has reported that Tri-Rail achieved an all-time ridership record
35 in Fiscal Year 2024-2025, carrying over 4.5 million passengers, demonstrating strong
36 demand and the critical role of commuter rail in South Florida's transportation network;

37 WHEREAS, despite record ridership, the SFRTA faces significant financial challenges
38 resulting from recent reductions in state operational funding, which threatens the long-term
39 stability and continuity of its Tri-Rail service;

40 WHEREAS, these changes create funding uncertainties for the SFRTA and may affect
41 its ability to engage in long-term planning and make contractual commitments necessary to
42 support reliable commuter rail service;

43 WHEREAS, the potential inability of SFRTA to engage in long-term planning and make
44 contractual commitments threatens the availability and reliability of a vital regional transit
45 option, and may force thousands of commuters to shift to personal vehicles, which could

significantly increase traffic congestion on Interstate 95 (I-95) and the Florida Turnpike and exacerbate commute delays;

WHEREAS, the reduction in state funding may also create challenges in identifying a sustainable long-term funding solution that meets the financial and operational needs of the SFRTA's regional rail network;

WHEREAS, changes to state funding structures may also have secondary impacts on related transit initiatives where coordination is required around shared assets such as rolling stock, infrastructure, and service planning;

WHEREAS, without sustained and predictable investment, it may become more difficult for SFRTA to maintain current service levels, pursue future improvements, and/or meet certain federal program requirements, which may negatively impact the broader stability of the regional transit system;

WHEREAS, Tri-Rail has utilized reserves and implemented operational efficiencies, including lowering administrative costs below state averages, but these measures are insufficient to close an existing budget deficit of at least \$30 million, emphasizing the need for dedicated, sustainable funding sources;

WHEREAS, the state's recent actions recede from the commitments made in prior years to invest in regional mobility solutions;

WHEREAS, SFRTA has engaged in long-term efforts and multiple studies with state and local partners for nearly two decades to secure a stable funding mechanism, underscoring the urgency of legislative and fiscal action to preserve and grow this vital regional transit service;

WHEREAS, the changes to the state funding structure potentially shift the burden of funding major infrastructure to local governments, many of which are already facing significant fiscal constraints;

WHEREAS, even if Tri-Rail Service were discontinued, the State of Florida remains financially responsible for infrastructure costs to keep the rail line open for use by Amtrak and CSX, with costs estimated to be in excess of \$40 million per year; and

WHEREAS, the Board of County Commissioners of Broward County, Florida ("Board"), desires that the state restore and provide critically needed assistance for this essential transit service provided by the SFRTA, NOW, THEREFORE,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF BROWARD COUNTY, FLORIDA:

Section 1. The Board urges the Florida Legislature to appropriate funding for the Florida Rail Enterprise Program to fund South Florida Regional Transportation Authority's Tri-Rail operations to maintain Tri-Rail's level of service, and further urges the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) to include such funding, as may be necessary, in the appropriate current and future FDOT Five-Year Work Programs.

Section 2. The Board directs the County Administrator to transmit a certified copy of this resolution to the Governor, the Senate President, the House Speaker, the Chair and all other members of the Broward State Legislative Delegation, the Secretary of the Florida Department of Transportation, the District Four Secretary of the Florida Department of Transportation, and the Executive Director of the Broward Metropolitan Planning Organization.

Section 3. The Board directs the County Administrator to have the County's state lobbyists advocate for the action described in Section 1 above, and to have the Office of Intergovernmental Affairs include this item in the proposed 2026 State Legislative Package when it is presented to the Board.

Section 4. Severability.

If any portion of this Resolution is determined by any court to be invalid, the invalid portion will be stricken, and such striking will not affect the validity of the remainder of this Resolution. If any court determines that this Resolution, in whole or in part, cannot be legally applied to any individual, group, entity, property, or circumstance, such determination will not affect the applicability of this Resolution to any other individual, group, entity, property, or circumstance.

Section 5. Effective Date.

This Resolution is effective upon adoption.

ADOPTED this day of , 2025. **PROPOSED**

Approved as to form and legal sufficiency:
Andrew J. Meyers, County Attorney

By: /s/ Nathaniel A. Kliksberg 09/05/2025
Nathaniel A. Kliksberg (date)
Transportation Surtax General Counsel