

# Resolution of the Freeport Merchants Association

## December 19<sup>th</sup>, 2007

**WHEREAS**, passenger rail service provides an environmentally sound, safe, all weather transportation choice to travelers; and

**WHEREAS**, passenger rail service has proven that it results in economic development in areas which it serves; and

**WHEREAS**, the over one and a half million people who have ridden the Downeaster passenger rail service operated since December 15<sup>th</sup>, 2001 by Amtrak for Maine's Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority, as well as the economic benefits associated with that service, clearly demonstrate the viability and vitality of passenger rail service in Maine and surrounding areas; and

**WHEREAS**, passenger rail service is of vital importance to Freeport, Maine as a primary tourism destination and economic engine for the region; and

**WHEREAS**, federal support for the operation of the Downeaster passenger rail service will terminate in 2008;

**NOW, THEREFORE**, it is hereby **RESOLVED** that:

1. The Freeport Merchants Association strongly supports the Downeaster passenger rail service and urges the Maine State Legislature to provide operating support on an ongoing basis for the portion of the costs of the operations of the Downeaster service that are not covered by other revenue sources, which, as proposed by Governor Baldacci's Task Force on Passenger Rail Funding, can occur without raising tax rates for Maine citizens; and
2. The Freeport Merchants Association strongly supports the expansion of the Downeaster passenger rail service, and the obvious resulting economic benefits, which now exist between Portland, Maine and Boston, Massachusetts northward through Yarmouth and Freeport, Maine to Brunswick, Maine within no more than two years, with further expansion and connections, including to existing and potential service routes of Maine Eastern Railroad, as soon as possible thereafter.

Signed this 19<sup>th</sup> day of December 2007, on behalf of the Freeport Merchants Association, by Dick Collins, Executive Director of the Association.