

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

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The Honorable Martin J. Oberman
Chairman
Surface Transportation Board
395 E Street, SW
Washington, DC 20423

Dear Chairman Oberman:

We write to express our strong support for the City of Jersey City in the pending abandonment and discontinuance proceeding (Consolidated Rail Corporation – Abandonment Exemption – in Hudson County, NJ, AB 167 (Sub-No. 1189X) concerning the Harsimus Branch line owned by Conrail. We respectfully urge you to keep Jersey City's interest in mind when reaching a final decision on this issue.

As the Members of Congress who represent Jersey City, we are committed to protecting the City's property rights. We were troubled to learn that Conrail sold the land containing the Harsimus Branch to a third party before seeking abandonment authorization from the Surface Transportation Board.

We believe that Jersey City was denied an opportunity to advocate for its position and would have been able to exercise a right of first refusal before the sale of the land. Jersey City was also deprived of an opportunity to acquire the land for the purpose of redeveloping part of it into a public park. Jersey City views conservation of the Harsimus Branch as a critical piece of local community development.

Again, we respectfully urge you to keep these considerations in mind when reaching a final decision on this proceeding. Thank you in advance for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



Donald M. Payne, Jr.
Member of Congress



Albio Sires
Member of Congress