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June 15, 2021

Ms. Cynthia Brown
Chief, Section of Administration
Office of Proceedings
Surface Transportation Board
395 E Street, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20423

Re: Docket No. AB 167 (Sub.no. 1189X), *Conrail – Abandonment Exemption – in Hudson County, NJ* and related CSX and NS dockets ~~AB 290 (Sub-no. 686X)~~ and AB 290 (Sub-no. 306X)

AB 55 (Sub-No. 686X)

Dear Ms. Brown:

I am writing about the proposed abandonment of the Harsimus Line by Consolidated Railroad (Conrail), and discontinuances by CSX Transportation (CSX) and Norfolk Southern Railway Company (NS), in the proceedings above. **I am asking that you not grant an abandonment license that is currently being sought by Conrail until the sale of the rail line is reversed and/or its transfer to the City of Jersey City for preservation purposes is facilitated.**

For thirteen years, my family has lived across the street from the Harsimus Embankment. Our children have grown up playing in its shadow and they volunteer to pick up trash around its edges on cleanup days. We all wake up to the early morning chatter of the birds that call the Embankment home.

And for thirteen years we have been witness to an endless series of failed attempts to resolve the question of this property -- an infuriating dance that predates our time here by nearly a decade. You are likely well versed in the highlights, including an illegal sale of the rail line to a group of LLCs controlled by an individual, agreements penned and suddenly rejected without explanation, and

continued shenanigans designed to stall legal proceedings. These reveal not only Conrail's bad faith in the dealings, but also, we suspect, a hope that the residents of our historic neighborhood would eventually grow bored of the fight and move on. We are neither bored nor moving on

So as your agency considers whether to deny Conrail an abandonment license because of their unlawful sale, I urge to hold them accountable for this blatant disregard for the law and the public good. While denying a license will not achieve our community's ultimate goals to use the Harsimus Branch for the city's needs of open space, trail, and possible light rail, it would continue to preserve the Embankment, which has provided stormwater control in a flood plain, forest and meadow habitat, and oxygenation of air and sequestration of carbon for more than a century - all of tremendous value to the families of Jersey City.

I am no expert, but it seems to me that by not using the force of your agency to hold Conrail accountable, the STB becomes complicit in Conrail's attempt to subvert the legal process that was put in place to hold them responsible for land that they were given to use for the public good.

The city of Jersey City, along with the county and the state, have been negotiating with Conrail in good faith for years. It's likely that your denial of the a won't end this long dispute, but it can send a powerful message at a crucial step along the way -- that rules matter. Our laws are the rules that we agree to live by as citizens. Your job is to demonstrate our collective will to enforce them.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tia Biasi". The script is cursive and fluid.

Tia Biasi

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I certify that I have this day served or caused to serve a copy on all Parties of Record in this proceeding by eservice or first-class mail.

Lia Biasi

Signature

June 16, 2021