



**OPEN SPACE
INSTITUTE**

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July 22, 2021

Ms. Cynthia Brown
Secretary, Office of Proceedings
Surface Transportation Board 395 E
Street, SW
Washington, DC 20423-0001

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Office of Proceedings
July 22, 2021
Part of
Public Record

RE: *Metro-North Commuter Railroad Company—Application for Adverse Discontinuance of
Trackage Rights—Housatonic Railroad Company*
STB Docket No. AB 1311.

Dear Ms. Brown:

The Open Space Institute (OSI), a registered 501c3 based in New York City, is submitting this support letter for the Application for Adverse Discontinuance of Trackage Rights submitted by Metro-North Commuter Railroad Company ("Metro-North") for trackage known as the "Beacon Line," an inactive railroad line which runs through center of our community.

OSI has been promoting and building rail trails for a number of years. The proposed discontinuance of Housatonic Railroad Company's Trackage Rights on the Beacon Line would allow this underutilized transportation corridor to be redeveloped and repurposed into a non-motorized multi-use path or "rail trail." The abandonment of the tracks will have a positive impact on Beacon and surrounding communities.

The discontinuance and subsequent railbanking process will allow the County of Dutchess in cooperation with the City of Beacon and Metro-North to develop the Beacon Line into a rail trail connecting our community to the Empire State Trail until such time that the rail is needed at some point in the future. This trail connection will provide local economic benefits and improve the quality of life for our residents.

OSI strongly supports Metro-North's proposed discontinuance of trackage rights and abandonment, and we appreciate your consideration of these comments.

Sincerely,

Kathy Moser
Chief Conservation Officer

cc: all parties of record