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September 13, 2021

To: Surface Transportation Board

Re: Docket No. AB 1305X - North Coast Railroad Authority (NCRA) abandonment exemption

Dear Surface Transportation Board Members:

This is a joint letter from the League of Women Voters of Humboldt County, League of Women Voters of Mendocino County, and the League of Women Voters of Sonoma County in opposition to the transportation of coal through northern California and the bay area by train.

It has been widely reported and corroborated that the North Coast Rail Company LLC is intending to use the northern California railroad to transport coal mined in the Rocky Mountains and intends to transport this coal across the state of California to Marin County, and then haul it north through Sonoma, Mendocino, Trinity, and Humboldt counties to the port of Humboldt.

The League of Women Voters wishes to express our strong opposition to the request of North Coast Railroad Co., LLC (NCRCo) to oppose the North Coast Railroad Authority's (NCRA) request for abandonment of certain sections of the long unused portions of the rail line from Willits to Humboldt County. Sections of the rail line have been rendered inoperable for safety reasons.

Given that the primary reason that the North Coast Railroad Co., LLC opposes this abandonment exemption is to allow the transport of coal to the Port of Humboldt Bay for transport to Asian markets, and that the burning of coal is a major contributor to global warming, it is unconscionable that we ship our coal to other countries to contribute to global warming.

Further, the railroad crosses environmentally sensitive areas, specifically two rivers that supply drinking water to thousands. The land along parts of the area is unstable and subject to landslides. A far better use of this abandoned rail bed is the further development of the Great Redwood Trail.

We urgently request that the STB deny the North Coast Railroad Co., LLC request to oppose North Coast Railroad Authority's abandonment exemption.

/s/ DR

/s/ CP

/s/ SH

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Cc: All Parties of Record

Re: Docket No. AB 1305X - North Coast Railroad Authority (NCRA) abandonment exemption

Resolution by the League of Women Voters of Humboldt, Mendocino and Sonoma Counties in Opposition to
the Transport of Coal through California and Sonoma County by Train.

Whereas Global climate change has contributed to escalating catastrophes in California, with an astonishing eight of the 20 most destructive fires in California history occurring in just the past five years, including the massive 2017 wildfires which resulted in the burning of 1.2 million acres of land, the destruction of 10,800 structures, insured losses of more than \$11 Billion, and at least 46 deaths;

Whereas the above mentioned Leagues of Women Voters recognize climate change, global warming, and water resources as primary concerns;

Whereas North Coast Railroad Company, LLC has recently submitted paperwork to the federal Surface Transportation Board objecting to the Railbanking for the Great Redwood Trail and stating they intend to purchase the railroad;

Whereas it has been widely reported and corroborated that the North Coast Railroad Company, LLC is intending to use the railroad to transport coal mined in the Rocky Mountains;

Whereas North Coast Railroad Company, LLC intends to transport this coal across the state of California to Marin County, and then haul it north through Sonoma, Mendocino, and Humboldt counties to the Port of Humboldt Bay;

Whereas the burning of fossil fuels such as coal is the single biggest contributor to climate change;

Whereas the burning of coal is responsible for nearly 50% of the carbon dioxide emissions worldwide, and accounts for over 70% of the greenhouse gas emissions from all electrical generation;

Whereas according to railroad studies, coal dust can escape from every loaded train car;

Whereas coal dust can cause devastating impacts to our drinking water, watersheds, and surrounding environment;

Whereas coal dust can cause devastating disease in humans and animals, cause spontaneous fires, and degrade and destabilize the rail bed;

Whereas the Russian and Eel Rivers supply drinking water to nearly one million people of Northern California and habitat for numerous threatened and endangered species; and

Whereas shipping coal through California's North Coast is dangerous to all living things; now, therefore,

Be it Resolved, that the League of Women Voters (LWV) of Humboldt, Mendocino and Sonoma Counties:

Notifies the Surface Transportation Board (STB) of our strong opposition to this application;

Urges the Surface Transportation Board to reject any and all applications to allow the transportation of coal over the abandoned railway running from northern Sonoma County to the California northern border; and

Urges the Surface Transportation Board to reject any application by North Coast Railroad Company, LLC to purchase said rail line.

Adopted: September 13, 2021

/s/ DR

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