

August 30, 2022

EI-32682

Martin Oberman

Chairman, Surface Transportation Board

395 E Street SW

Washington, DC 20423

Dear Mr. Oberman:

I am writing today to ask you to help those of us for whom access to the Mississippi River is critical to our well-being from becoming victims of the Canadian Pacific Railroad (CPR) and Kansas City Southern (KCS) Railroad proposed merger. I live in Bettendorf, Iowa, which is adjacent to Davenport, Iowa, 3 blocks from the railroad. My home is not substantially impacted by the train, but my beloved community soon will be.

The City of Davenport lives directly on the banks of the Mississippi River; the river is within 1-2 blocks of all our downtown amenities. Two cruise lines dock in Davenport and boat visitors have access to restaurants, shopping, the Adler Theater (performing arts), the Figge Art Museum, and the German American Heritage Center.

Le Claire Park is a green space next to the river with a band shell and permanent some seating where every summer a few thousand citizens attend our Quad City Symphony pop concert and the 4th of July Celebration. As you walk slightly west you will find Modern Woodman Park, home to the Quad City River Bandits, our minor league baseball team, and the Midwest League affiliate of the Kansas City Royals. It was built in 1931 and underwent a \$12.5 million renovation in 2004. There is a Ferris wheel next to the ballpark. A "Play Park" next to the river is being considered.

Coursing immediately next to the river is the Mississippi River Trail. This is a 3,000-mile bike and pedestrian path that begins in northern Minnesota and ends near the Gulf of Mexico in Venice, Louisiana.

In southwest Davenport is the Nahant Marsh Education Center, a 305-acre nature preserve, part of a 513-acre wetland complex that is bordered by the Mississippi River. In 2021, there were 1800 visitors to

the education center, 496 students took field trips, and the paths were hiked an estimated 27,000 times. Cars entered the preserve 46,000 times.

The railroad separates all of these activities and locations from access by foot or vehicle. That means there is no access to visitors and to emergency vehicles when trains are on the tracks.

CPR has had 5 derailments over the past 3 years. One in 2019 killed 3 people in Canada. One in LeClaire, Iowa, involving several cars occurred in 2020. These trains will be transporting highly explosive crude oil.

Finally, there is the associated increase in noise and vibration that will impact those living next to tracks.

Currently, there is a train on the tracks about 8 times a day. The proposed merger would increase that to 22 (and potentially more). There are some serious issues with this proposed increase. Increasing the number of trains increases the risk for all negative events mentioned above.

The Davenport City Council reached an agreement to allow this increase in train traffic in exchange for \$10 million dollars and one vehicular railroad crossing (and an agreement not to request public discussion). The Scott County Board of Supervisors are in support of a letter opposing the merger.

The Surface Transportation Board is meeting September 13, 2022, in Davenport. We understand it will decide to approve or reject this merger in the next few months. I and many others will be there to learn more and express our sincere hopes that the merger will not take place.

I hope you will look further into our concerns. The railroad merger will profoundly affect many of the Iowa towns and cities that lie along its path.

Sincerely,



Catherine Weideman

315 Holmes Street

Bettendorf, IA 52722