



Brotherhood of Railroad Signalmen

917 Shenandoah Shores Road
Front Royal, VA 22630

Phone: (540) 622-6522
Fax: (540) 622-6532

Michael S. Baldwin
President

James M. Finnegan
Secretary-Treasurer

309022

December 18, 2024
(via online at stb.gov)

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Public Record

Docket Operations Facility
Surface Transportation Board
395 E Street, SW
Washington, DC 20423

RE: Docket AB 290 (Sub-No 415X), Norfolk Southern Railway Company—Abandonment Exemption—in Henderson and Polk Counties, NC and Greenville and Spartanburg Counties, SC.

Comments of the Brotherhood of Railroad Signalmen

The Brotherhood of Railroad Signalmen (BRS) is filing comments concerning the above-referenced docket that was printed in the November 20, 2024, Federal Register (Page No. 91870-91871). The BRS is the duly recognized collective bargaining representative for roughly 10,000 signal employees who are responsible for the inspection, installation, construction, repair, and maintenance of all signal systems and highway-rail grade crossings on all Class I railroads and various other Carriers in the United States. Our membership has a vested interest in the abandonment above which affects our members.

“Norfolk Southern Railway Company (NSR) has filed a verified notice of exemption pursuant to 49 CFR part 1152, subpart F—Exempt Abandonments to abandon an approximately 31.3-mile rail line extending from approximately milepost W 26.0 +/- to approximately milepost W 57.3 +/- in Henderson and Polk Counties, N.C., and Greenville and Spartanburg Counties, S.C. (the Line).”

The BRS acknowledges the abandonment of the Norfolk Southern-owned line segment without opposition. Currently, this segment is maintained by highly skilled workers who perform scheduled testing, maintenance, and repairs on 15-grade crossings and 2-hand throw switch locations. The expertise of this individual is crucial for ensuring compliance with federal guidelines and maintaining the safety of the locations. However, we are compelled to emphasize our opposition to the loss of work and duly note it for the record.

While the current arrangement of maintenance and testing assets does not directly harm our membership, the BRS feels it is necessary to address potential concerns regarding future transactions that could result in job losses. The labor force has already suffered significant reductions, and actions such as this abandonment could exacerbate the strain on an already diminished workforce. We strongly urge the Surface Transportation Board to recognize that each

abandoned portion of railroad assets bears the potential to adversely affect the workforce, perhaps not immediately, but certainly in the future.

If you have any questions, please contact my office at 540.622.6525.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael Baldwin", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Michael S. Baldwin
President

cc: All Parties of Record