

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

October 24, 2023

Andrea Poole
Surface Transportation Board
Environmental Filing, Docket No. FD 36616
395 E. Street SW
Washington, DC 20423

Dear Ms. Poole,

We are writing to request full and fair consideration for the Savage Tooele Railroad (STR) and its proposed rail line to serve tenants of the Lakeview Business Park (LBP) in Grantsville, Utah.

The draft environmental assessment (EA) concludes that the STR would have no impacts on several environmental resource areas, including air quality, energy, land use, zoning, local plans, and historic resources. The impacts of the proposed action range from “no impacts” to “some impacts, which can be minimized with mitigation.” Given the findings of the draft EA, it appears that the proposed STR would not pose significant environmental risks and that any potential risks can be effectively mitigated.

The implementation of the project will result in benefits consistent with state and federal objectives concerning more environmentally sustainable movement of freight by shifting the mode of transportation from truck to rail. With rail connectivity into the LBP enabling businesses to receive and ship materials and products via rail, it is estimated that more than half a million commercial truck trips, and over a quarter of a billion commercial vehicle miles traveled will be avoided within the first 20 years of the project’s implementation. A study conducted in collaboration with the U.S. Department of Transportation found that when comparing fuel efficiency, truck freight averaged 155 miles per gallon carrying one ton of cargo, whereas rail freight averaged 413 miles per gallon carrying one ton of cargo.ⁱ Given the serious air quality challenges Utah faces, and considering that 42% of air pollution along the Wasatch Front is attributed to mobile sources such as cars and trucks,ⁱⁱ the STR’s potential positive impact on regional air quality should not be overlooked. Developing the STR will bring critical rail connectivity to the Lakeview Business Park (LBP), modal choice for the tenants, and a sustainable option for freight movement in and out of the LBP.

The proposed rail line would provide needed rail service connecting the LBP to Union Pacific’s Shafter Subdivision and the national rail network. The optimized modal choice for tenants will contribute to the business park's investment attraction, leading to employment creation and bolstering the economic vitality of the rapidly growing region. There is currently insufficient rail infrastructure to accommodate the demands of a rising population for manufacturing, distribution, and warehousing facilities.

We are confident in the applicant's objective of providing safe, efficient, and environmentally sustainable movement of freight, which supports the economic vitality in the region and the state of Utah. On behalf of

Utah residents, we respectfully request your full and fair consideration of the STR's application and merit-based recommendation to the Surface Transportation Board.

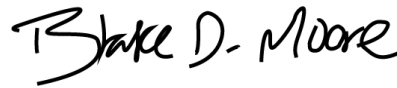
ⁱ A. Protopapas *et al.*, "Modal Comparison of Domestic Freight Transportation Effects on the General Public," Transp. Res. Rec. **2330**, 55 (2013). Accessed at https://rosap.ntl.bts.gov/view/dot/5800/dot_5800_DS1.pdf.

ⁱⁱ Utah Division of Air Quality' "Taking Stock of Emissions in Utah,"(2019). Accessed at <https://deq.utah.gov/air-quality/taking-stock-of-emissions-in-utah>.

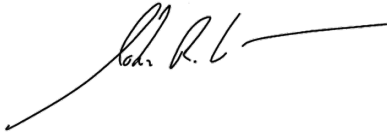
Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "B. Owens", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Burgess Owens
Member of Congress

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "Blake D. Moore", with a horizontal line underneath.

Blake D. Moore
Member of Congress

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "John R. Curtis", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

John Curtis
Member of Congress