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VIA ELECTRONIC FILING

Surface Transportation Board
395 E Street, SW
Washington, DC 20423-0001

Re: Docket No. FD 36873, Union Pacific Corp., et al. - Control - Norfolk Southern Corp., et al. - Resident Comments on the Significance of Blocked Rail Crossings

To Chairman Fuchs and members of the Surface Transportation Board:

I am a retired elementary school teacher and a longtime resident of Houston, Texas, living in the Eastwood neighborhood near Union Pacific rail lines that run through my community. I am writing to ask the Board to take blocked rail crossings seriously as it evaluates the proposed merger between Union Pacific and Norfolk Southern.

My experience

I have lived next to an active rail crossing in Eastwood for more than a decade. When my family moved in, we understood that trains would move through our neighborhood. We did not anticipate how often the trains would stop, and how much that single fact would reshape daily life on our block.

Speeding cars race down our street trying to get around the train, endangering pedestrians who sometimes have to walk in the street because of blocked and dangerous sidewalks. The extremely loud horn in the early hours of the morning disrupts our sleep every night. When trains block the intersection, the warning bell rings constantly, loud enough to be heard inside the house.

As a retired teacher, the part that troubles me most is what happens to the children. Students are delayed during arrival and dismissal when the intersection is blocked by a

train, which is why we routinely see adults and children crawling over and under stopped train cars to get through.

Why this matters in our community

Blocked crossings pose public safety risks to our community. They delay emergency response times for fire, EMS, and police. They cut off access to schools, medical facilities, and workplaces. They affect the ability of residents, including elderly neighbors and parents with small children, to move through their own neighborhood on foot or by car.

Eastwood and the surrounding East End neighborhoods already bear a disproportionate share of freight rail impacts. We have lived alongside these tracks for generations. The proposed merger is projected to grow freight volumes through our community, and growth in train counts and train length translates directly into more frequent and longer blockages at the at-grade crossings we depend on every day.

The Applicant's position should not control the Board's review

In their May 12, 2026, reply on completeness (UP-51/NS-49, Section XI), Applicants take the position that blocked crossings are appropriately addressed only through the Board's environmental review process under 49 C.F.R. § 1180.8(a)(2). I respectfully disagree with deferring this issue to a separate, slower track.

Blocked crossings are a present, daily reality in Eastwood, and they will worsen if freight volumes grow under the merged railroad. The application proceeding is the moment when residents along the line can meaningfully participate and when the Board has the leverage to impose binding conditions. Environmental review on its own does not produce enforceable operating conditions on the merged railroad. A meaningful response to blocked crossings requires conditions imposed at the time of merger approval, with measurable reporting requirements and a real enforcement mechanism. Without those, communities along the line have no practical recourse when blockages happen.

The Board has clear authority under 49 U.S.C. § 10101 and 49 U.S.C. § 11324(c) to impose conditions necessary to protect the public interest, including conditions addressing community impacts of a proposed control transaction. Approving this merger without addressing blocked crossings in densely populated communities would consolidate freight rail control through our neighborhood without corresponding accountability.

Conditions I respectfully request

I respectfully ask that the Board:

1. Treat blocked crossings in the East End of Houston as a substantive issue within this merger proceeding now, alongside the environmental review process, so that affected residents can participate before any approval is granted.
2. Require Applicants to disclose, by neighborhood and by crossing, projected post-merger frequency, duration, and timing of blockages at at-grade crossings in densely populated communities along their lines, including Eastwood and the broader East End of Houston.
3. Condition any approval of the proposed transaction on enforceable measures to reduce blocked crossings, including:
 - A requirement that Applicants share real-time train movement information with local emergency services and 911 dispatchers.
 - Public quarterly reporting on blockage frequency and duration at identified high-impact crossings.
 - A dedicated regional point of contact and complaint process for affected residents and local governments.
 - Investment in grade separation, signaling improvements, or other mitigation at crossings the Board identifies as posing the greatest public safety risk.

Thank you for your consideration. I am happy to provide additional information about my experience or the impacts on my neighborhood if it would assist the Board's review.

Respectfully submitted,

Paulette Kukuk

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cc: Parties of Record

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I hereby certify that on this 19th day of May, 2026, the foregoing document was served to all parties of record to this proceeding.

/s/ Paulette Kukuk

Paulette Kukuk