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Public Record

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VIA ELECTRONIC FILING TO:

Chairman Patrick Fuchs
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 resident of Houston, Texas, living in East Downtown Houston near several Union Pacific rail lines in our 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 HOA Board, for Live Oak Lofts, has unanimously voted their approval and support, as well.

My experience

Just today, I was en route to a Sunday afternoon Civic Club meeting and had to reroute my path to avoid trains on these lines. In one direction, a train was completely stopped and blocking multiple intersections, and a train was moving on the tracks in the opposite direction. As usual, vehicular traffic along with bicycles were lined up waiting, with some cars and cyclists making uturns to find another path. This is business as usual. When there are emergencies in Houston like hurricanes and or fires, this becomes more than a nuisance; it is the source of anxiety and hypervigilance for our community, and occasionally the cause of more dire, scary and sad results as folks cross the trains, taking a dangerous but understandable gamble.

Why this matters in our community

PUBLIC SAFETY: 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 residents' ability to move through their own neighborhood on foot or by car, including elderly neighbors and parents with small children.

EQUITY: The East End and surrounding Houston neighborhoods already bear a disproportionate share of freight rail impacts. We have lived alongside these tracks for generations.

DATA SUPPORTING NEGATIVE IMPACTS: 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 treating this as a procedural punt to a separate, slower track.

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

Closing

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,
Marcie

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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/ Marcie Hysinger
Marcie Hysinger