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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 Houston mom writing to ask the Board to take blocked rail crossings seriously as it considers the proposed merger between Union Pacific and Norfolk Southern. My neighborhood My family has lived near the Galveston Subdivision rail line since the mid-1950s, and I've called the Eastwood Triangle, bordered by the Galveston Sub, East Belt, and West Belt, home since 2006. What was once an occasional nuisance has become a daily reality that shapes how my family moves through our own neighborhood.

In just the first four months of 2026, the Galveston Subdivision recorded 233 blockages lasting more than ten minutes each, totaling over 110 hours of blocked crossing time, often during morning and evening rush hours. When Polk and the East Belt goes down, truck traffic gets pushed onto my residential street, a no-through-trucks road, with drivers speeding to make up for lost time. Lockwood and Altic get hit daily too. My son has been late to school and sports practices. My husband and I have missed appointments. Family members can't get to us. I've watched ambulances, fire trucks, school buses, city workers, public transit, pedestrians, and cyclists all sit stuck behind a stopped train.

Why this matters

Blocked crossings aren't just an inconvenience. They delay emergency responders, cut off access to schools and medical facilities, and make it harder for everyone, including elderly neighbors and parents with small children, to move through the neighborhood safely on foot or by car.

The East End has lived alongside these tracks for generations and already bears a disproportionate share of freight rail impacts. The proposed merger is projected to grow freight

volumes through our community. More trains and longer trains mean more blockages, more often, at the at-grade crossings we depend on every day. I ask the Surface Transportation Board to require concrete, enforceable commitments to reduce blocked crossings before approving this merger.

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 post-merger 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,

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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/ Amy Erickson
Amy Erickson*