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Office of Chief Counsel
November 3, 2026
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Public Record

BEFORE THE
SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BOARD

Docket No. AB 290 (Sub-No. 425X)

NORFOLK SOUTHERN RAILWAY COMPANY ABANDONMENT EXEMPTION
IN ROCKINGHAM, SHENANDOAH, AND WARREN COUNTIES, VA

Reply of Rockingham County, Virginia
In Opposition to the Motion to Hold Proceeding in Abeyance

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Reply of Rockingham County, Virginia

In Opposition to the Motion to Hold Proceeding in Abeyance

The Rockingham County, Virginia Board of Supervisors respectfully submits this Reply in Opposition to the Motion to Hold in Abeyance filed on October 14, 2026, by the Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Foundation and its subsidiary, Manassas Gap Railroad LLC (together, "SVBF"). As an integrally invested and affected supporting locality, Rockingham County respectfully asks to be considered a party of record for these proceedings.

This submission shall act as a formal request to this honorable Board to:

- Deny the Motion to Hold in Abeyance;
- Lift the housekeeping stay entered on October 22, 2026; and,
- Allow this proceeding to continue on the schedule established through the Board's operational regulations.

Northern Rockingham County, specifically the Town of Broadway, is the terminus of the Southern end of the 48.5 mile rail line at issue ("Line"). The Line begins near Heritage Park in the Town of Broadway and runs along the North Fork of the Shenandoah River and Linville Creek crossing an 184-foot bridge on the way to the Plains District Memorial Park in the Town of Timberville. In coordination and partnership with seven (7) incorporated Towns, Rockingham County is responsible for land-use planning, zoning considerations, economic development and transportation proposals within the 853 square miles of Rockingham County.

Rockingham County has remained publicly engaged and supportive of thoughtful planning efforts and proper public hearing processes, endorsing informed, responsible decision making regarding the conversion of the Line to the Shenandoah Rail Trail.

In anticipation of the project progressing through the established and dedicated evaluation and fulfillment processes of the Commonwealth and Congress, the proposed use of the Line, the Shenandoah Rail Trail, was specifically included in the County's 2024 Comprehensive Plan. Prior to that inclusion, the Rockingham County Board of Supervisors formally adopted a Resolution, on March 24, 2021, endorsing the acquisition and conversion of the Line for the purpose of a multi-use trail for alternative transportation and recreation and in recognition of the corridor's potential to catalyze tourism-related growth, improve public safety while connecting two towns via bicycle, pedestrian and equestrian access through unique natural landscapes and historic sites.

Rockingham County supports the abandonment of the Line by the Norfolk Southern Railway Company ("NSR").

Rockingham County supports the acquisition of the corridor by the Commonwealth of Virginia as requested through the Virginia Department of Transportation October 28, 2026 filing of the Statement of Willingness to assume financial responsibility for interim trail use and railbanking of the 48.5 miles within the Line.

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In Opposition to the Motion to Hold Proceeding in Abeyance

Rockingham County supports and respectfully requests this Board to allow the evaluation for and timely determination, of the Line's future, to occur through the previously identified and scheduled Abandonment Exemption Proceeding as assigned by Congress.

Respectfully submitted,

Rockingham County, Virginia
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Dated: November 3, 2026

CC: Parties of Record