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April 20, 2018

Ms. Cynthia T. Brown
Chief, Section of Administration
Surface Transportation Board
Office of Proceedings
395 E Street, S.W.
Washington, DC 20423-0001

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ENTERED
Office of Proceedings
April 23, 2018
Part of
Public Record



Re: Docket No. FD 36178, Metropolitan Council – Petition for Declaratory Order
Docket No. FD 36177, Hennepin County Regional Rail Authority – Acquisition
Exemption – In Hennepin County, Minnesota

LETTER IN SUPPORT OF TWIN CITIES 7 WESTERN RAILROAD COMPANY'S INITIAL REPLY REQUESTING THE
BOARD TO SET A PROCEDURAL SCHEDULE

Dear Ms. Brown:

The Mosaic Company urges the Board to set a procedural schedule in the above referenced proceeding (FD 36178) to permit public comment and a full hearing on Metropolitan Council's Petition seeking to acquire ownership of the Bass Lake and Kenilworth corridors in Hennepin County, Minnesota. The Board should also stay the Hennepin County Regional Rail Authority's ("HCRRA") request in FD 36177 to acquire the common carrier obligations for the line.

The Mosaic Company is the world's leading integrated producer and marketer of concentrated phosphate and potash. We mine and process phosphate and potash minerals into crop nutrients, and then ship to our customers in the major agricultural centers of the world.

Many farmers depend on the fertilizer we ship to customers located on TCW. We depend on TCW rail service for efficient and effective rail access to move various fertilizer products to the Twin Cities to connect with Major Class I carriers such as BNSF, Canadian Pacific, and Union Pacific, via a route that includes the Bass Lake/Kenilworth corridor.

Several years ago, TCW informed us that the Metropolitan Council was seeking to expand its light rail service from Minneapolis west to certain suburban communities. When it was determined that the Metropolitan Council had selected the Bass Lake / Kenilworth corridor for a joint light rail / freight rail corridor, TCW committed that it would work with the Council to reach agreements both to minimize disruption to freight rail service during construction and thereafter to assure that the presence of light rail in the freight rail corridor would not negatively impact TCW's operational and economic ability to provide service, or force shippers, such as Mosaic, to subsidize the expense of adding light rail to the corridor.



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We understand the Metropolitan Council has filed its present Petition asking the board to approve an arrangement whereby the Council will acquire ownership of the rail line but will ask the Board to transfer the common carrier obligation to HCRRA. This is a very complicated transaction that needs full public input and understanding.

We urge the Board to delay HCRRA's request to acquire the common carrier obligation and set a procedural schedule to solicit the views of others affected by this transaction – shippers like ourselves who need to vital rail route to move our goods through the Twin Cities. Entrusting the common carrier obligation to a public entity that does not operate freight rail service provides little assurance that important shipper interests in continued effective transportation service will be protected. In addition, deciding on this matter without reaching an agreement with the one entity that is currently – and effectively – providing the common carrier service, TCW, is a matter of significant concern and warrants close scrutiny by the Board.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jeff Christoffersen", is placed above the printed name.

Jeff Christoffersen
Vice President Supply Chain
The Mosaic Company
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Cc: Parties of Record

By mail to the STB:

Ms. Cynthia T. Brown
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Surface Transportation Board



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