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Whitewater Valley Railroad
P O Box 406
Connersville, Indiana 47331
www.whitewatervalleyrr.org



Ms. Cynthia T. Brown
Chief, Section of Administration
Office of Proceedings Surface Transportation Board
395 E Street, S.W., Room 1034
Washington, DC 20024

Re: Docket No. FD 36137
City of Fishers, City of Noblesville, and Hamilton County, Indiana
Petition for Partial Revocation of Exemption

Dear Ms. Brown:

Enclosed for filing to the above-captioned proceeding of written comment regarding the "Petition for Partial Revocation of Exemption" filed on August 1, 2017 with the Surface Transportation Board. A copy of this comment has also been served on the attorney, Robert A. Wimbish, who is representing the collective owners, City of Fishers, City of Noblesville, and Hamilton County (the "Owners"), of a railroad line in Indiana.

The Whitewater Valley Railroad ("WVRR") is a 501(C)3 not for profit educational organization dedicated to the preservation of a historic branch line railroad, to the restoration of railroad equipment, and to the conduct of educational railroad programs. The WVRR is an organization formed in 1972 to preserve and operate the former New York Central Whitewater branch line railroad that operated between Connersville, Indiana and Metamora, Indiana which was built in the late 1800's.

We are writing to express our opposition to the proposed railbanking and interim trail use of the subject former Nickle Plate Railroad line (the "NKP Line") from milepost I- 2.13 at Indianapolis, Indiana, to milepost I-39.69 at Tipton, Indiana. As a similar line to our very own former NYC trackage, we see no point in removing an existing rail that could easily be reconnected to national rail network; making this line viable once again. The WVRR Board of Directors believes that the Owners of the former NKP Line are filing for railbanking and removal of a railroad dating back to the late 1800's in a manner that may not be in the spirit of the written law.

As a similar organization we are not affiliated to the former operator nor are we a part of the process of becoming the new operator of the former NKP Line. We the Board of Directors of the WVRR feel that the Owners are not being forthcoming about railbanking of former NKP Line. The precedent set by such a filing could jeopardize the future of all rail operators of freight, commuter and heritage rail in the United States.

We also disagree with the Owners filing to reject future public comment on this matter. This very much involves the public of both Hamilton County Indiana and the surrounding counties that the former NKP Line operates into. It also affects the residents of Indiana that may not have the opportunity to visit and possibly enjoy this piece of history in the future as an active rail line.

If the owners are permitted to remove the rail through this process the likelihood of ever having it replaced is very unlikely. This would mean no possibility of future economic development in the area via rail or the future preservation of this piece of Indiana and United States History. Please help us to preserve the history of the former NKP Line, one of the oldest rail lines in the state of Indiana, by maintaining its presence.

The members of Whitewater Valley Railroad ask that you reject the owner's Petition for Partial Revocation of Exemption.

Sincerely,

John Hillman

John Hillman, President
Whitewater Valley Railroad