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May 10, 2018
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FD 36025

May 8, 2018

Members of the Surface Transportation Board (STB):

I am writing this letter to you seeking your help in making right a terrible injustice. Since 2014 my family and I have continued to have our lives placed on hold due to the Texas High Speed Rail Project spearheaded by Texas Central Rail (TCR) and Texas Central Partners (TCP). There are many improvements my family and I would like to make to our land and home, but cannot due to this project. In 2014 we attended a TCR sponsored event at the Kimbro Community Center in Madisonville, Texas. It was at that point that Mr. Brady Redwine, then a member of TCRs real estate team, now a Vice President for Texas Central Railroad and Infrastructure, Inc. told us that TCR would have to take our entire 50 acres for the project. I asked him why that was. He responded that the path they had chosen would run the train directly through my living room. This was before the outcome of their petition before the STB and the DEIS was close to being released. If this is not ethical behavior, I do not know what is. From that point forward, my family and I have been re-victimized each and every day in regards to this project.

When the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) was released in late December of 2017, the public was only granted 30 days to review a document consisting of 5,647 pages while TCR had over 3 years to develop it. Additionally, the document in its entirety was only available at the local library or county courthouse extension. This made viewing and research problematic for the community, especially since there was only one copy at each location. During the response period, numerous issues were identified with the Uniform Resource Locator (URL) web address given by the FRA as the site to post comments to. Initially, there was a restriction on the number of characters that could be used. Then, they added the ability to add or upload documents. Lastly, the portal the FRA used redirected to another web page during the middle of the comment period. Please keep in mind that these changes were occurring DURING the comment period.

The Madison County FRA meeting itself experienced issues. Initially, the venue for the 5 February 2018 meeting was to be held in the Madisonville Consolidated Independent School District High School auditorium which would have seated approximately 600 people. We discovered just prior to the event that the venue had been changed to the Kimbro Community

Center, a venue that seated approximately 300 people. I immediately called the FRA project manager, Kevin Wright of the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA), who assured me that he was sure it was due to "circumstances beyond their control". I did not believe this and contacted the school and asked if it had ever been booked. The person responsible for the booking told me that they had told the representative of AECOM, the engineering firm hired by TCR, that the venue was booked for a school event during the requested date. The discussion between the school and AECOM took place prior to the Christmas 2017 holidays. I immediately called Kevin back two additional times and he finally admitted to me that the venue had never been booked. That was the first time Kevin Wright of the FRA told an untruth and made a misleading statement. During the 5 February 2018 meeting, I met with representatives of the FRA and asked them why the "No Build" alternative was taken off the table. They stated that the "No Build" should ever be taken off the table as it remains viable during the project. I stated that witness heard Kevin Wright state in open forum and tell the assembled audience at the Corsicana Texas FRA meeting that the "No Build" alternative was off the table as "it didn't meet the need". This is the second time Kevin Wright of the FRA told an untruth while attempting to mislead the public. To put a fine point on the issue, one could construe that he is aiding and abetting TCR.

Lastly, over time, there were hundreds of comments and points of fact that disputed the erroneous information in the DEIS. Regardless of that fact, TCR continues to move forward with drilling core samples, conducting surveys, and telling the general public they have the right of eminent domain. While this is going on, the FRA has refused to acknowledge any of the input or facts that were presented in response to the DEIS.

During the FRA community outreach engagements, more information came to light about TCR and the way they conduct business. It is proven that one key TCR investor (Jack Matthews) owns the land where the Dallas station will be located and his business associate and partner (Joseph Drysdale) purchased the Roan's Prairie station location years ago and also formed a company called HSR Holdings LLC. Mr. Drysdale also owns other parcels of property along the utility corridor. Think about that for a moment. The current route TCR wants, the "utility corridor" is not being pressed because it is the most beneficial, the most economical, or the most feasible. The TxDOT Ridership Study even advised TCR against an intermediate stop as "The estimated capital costs also changed for the modified Dallas/ Fort Worth to Houston

corridor, since removing the College Station stop allowed for a more direct route and reduced the route length (reduced capital cost)". The route TCR wants, the "preferred route, the utility corridor" is being forced so that the rail line will hit the Roan's Prairie stop and allow for Mr. Drysdale to get a return on his investment. Is this the type of company the STB wishes to support?

To further highlight the type of employees TCR hires, I would like to discuss Mr. David Benzion. Mr. Benzion is the Communications Director for Texas Central Partners, LLC. David approached my wife and father in law at a FRA meeting in February 2018 and walked up to them proclaiming, "you don't belong here". Here we have a highly placed representative, the DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATIONS, of TCR/TCP telling my family they don't have the right to attend an open meeting with the FRA on a project that could irreparably change our lives. I wrote to the project manager of the FRA (Kevin Wright) and Rebecca Cowle from TCR about this unacceptable behavior asking them to address it and reach out to me. Neither Kevin nor Rebecca reached out to me. I had to address his deplorable and professionally unacceptable behavior with his supervisor, Holly Reed, during the 5 March 2018 FRA outreach meeting in Houston. As a precursor to David's behavior at the February FRA meeting, He asked me during a 2017 debate in Cypress Texas between TCR and TAHSR "what would you say if I told you that the train wasn't going to go that way (meaning the utility corridor)", to which point I asked him to stop lying to me. All these events show what "working with the landowners" means to TCR and their affiliates. The next employee of TCR/TCP that I would like to bring to your attention is Mr. David Hagy, Texas Central's Regional VP of External Affairs. I would like to point out some of the blatant lies that Mr. Hagy told to the Press at the March 1st Eight County Sheriff Coalition Press Conference at the Grimes County Court House regarding the Sheriff's fight for Public Safety, Emergency Response (ER), and Quality of Life for their residents free of disrespect, trespassing of their property, and threats. Mr. Hagy stated that "We have never had a reported case of Surveyors Trespassing without permission". What about My father-in-Law, Mr. Ron Richards who lives on the same property we do who ran off three different groups of surveyors on three different occasions who either attempted to trespass or were in the act of trespass, or the soil boring illegally performed on Waller County rights of way (ROW), or damages inflicted by surveyor markings to several County Roads without authority to do work on County ROW as well as surveyors being removed in Leon County while working on County

ROW without approval? It appears that Mr. Hagy is either misinformed, which in and of itself is inexcusable since he holds a vice presidents position in the company or he outright misled the media and the public. Next, Mr. Hagy stated that the project would be "grade separated, we do not cross a road, and we are always over the road". This is another outright untruth as from the DEIS, the number of roads crossed varies from 212 to 226, 50% of crossing would be located beneath the HSR Viaduct. Of those crossings approximately 69 percent would require limited road modifications. Road modifications could include road under railway, road over railway, relocation, reroute, closure or acquisition. In addition to cutting the Farm to Market (FM) road that runs in front of my property, this project will cut the historic Old San Antonio Road (OSR), one of two named roads in Texas. All other roads in Texas are identified by numbers. The number of roads modified is from 144 up to 242 roads. This information was provided by TCR/TCP and its affiliate company AECOM, yet, Mr. Hagy, a VP in their company either doesn't know that information or he has a problem with telling the truth. I asked Mr. Hagy about his statement at the 5 March 2018 Houston FRA meeting. Mr. Hagy told me that "he had to be careful of what he said as there was a lot of information in the DEIS". This is a far cry from his confident assertion at the Sheriff's meeting. Finally, there is one major misleading statement that Mr. Hagy told the public and the media. Mr. Hagy stated "for all of those who can see or hear the train, we are trying to be a good neighbor". This is an outright untruth as one of the affiliate companies, Contract Land Staff (CLS) reached out to me in December of 2016. Rene Richards of CLS stated to me that "maybe Gene, the solution is that you accept the offer, whatever it is, find a comparable piece of property that may have a house on it and move your family there". This is after receiving documentation in the mail threatening a lawsuit if I did not grant permission to survey my land. This one exchange speaks to the heart of the matter. TCR/TCP, AECOM, and CLS have no intention of working with landowners. Instead, they use threats, coercion and outright misleading and untruthful statements ("we have eminent domain") to get what they want.

In closing, I would like to point out the fact that the STB has already made a ruling on TCRs petition previously. In summation, TCR was told to engage the state government of Texas which they did during the 2017 legislative session. Since that time, TCR/TCP have been exposed for the unethical organization they are. So much so, they have now approached your board under the original docket to seek your jurisdiction and the right of eminent domain,

effectively bypassing the state government that your board sent them back to. I have given close to 23 years in the service of my country between Reserve Forces duty and Active Federal Service in the Army. Never in my wildest dreams did I ever imagine that I would have to fight an unethical company and my own government to keep what is rightfully mine. If your board grants this privately funded for profit company that has foreign interests (the Japanese investment bank) jurisdiction to operate, where will it end? Consider this, if this project is allowed to proceed, no matter what the bank says, no matter what the deed to your land or home says, no matter what the title company says, a private for profit company claiming they have the right of eminent domain can take what is legally yours and you will be expected to accept it and say thank you. The only option here is NO BUILD!!!

I welcome your feedback and questions. I can be reached at gene.whitesides@yahoo.com or my home phone number 936-348-4693.

Thank you,

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Gene P. Whitesides LTC, USA (Ret)
Directly Impacted Land/Homeowner

DEIS Plot ID: 10585
Parcel ID: 29979
GEO ID: R-0113-000-0391-901
8491 FM 978
Normangee, TX 77871

CF: All Parties of Record