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Ann D. Begeman, Acting Chairman
Office of Proceeding-Surface Transportation Board
395 E Street SW, Room 1034
Washington, D.C. 20024

RE: Docket No. FD-36137-0 "Nickel Plate Railroad"

Dear Ms. Begeman:

I am very concerned about the proposed removal of railroad track between the towns of Fishers and Noblesville, Indiana. This route has huge potential as both a freight and passenger line, and should be kept intact for those purposes.

Nearly \$2 million of both Federal and local taxpayer money was used to purchase this trackage about 20 years ago for potential use as a commuter rail route to alleviate heavy highway traffic congestion along this corridor. Taxpayer money was also spent to build a passenger station in Fishers. Requests for an operator were announced only a few months ago, and several proposals were submitted.

The highest scoring applicant, Iowa Pacific Holdings, proposed freight service which had not been provided for many years. The Iowa Pacific group's proposal also included continuing the much loved Fair Train to the State fair and instituting a Polar Express train they successfully have run elsewhere. Other rail related services were proposed as well as a **scheduled passenger service** (commuter rail). This groups bid was rejected on the grounds that the two cities did not want freight trains.

Rejecting this bid by the Port Authority looks suspiciously like they never intended to operate the line as proposed in the bidding process. It is my belief they thought this would give them additional grounds to remove the line. This country and state cannot afford to lose any more railroad already in place. It is imperative for future generations that connections between towns and regions be maintained, not broken.

I am requesting the Surface Transportation Board reject the proposal put forth by the cities of Fishers and Noblesville and Hamilton County to remove any track and direct them to utilize this railroad as intended when they accepted taxpayer dollars to purchase this railroad line.

Respectfully,

Phillip Streby
Board Member, National Association of Railroad Passengers (NARP)
Board Member, Rail Users Network (RUN)
Treasurer, Indiana Passenger Rail Alliance

I certify that these comments have been provided to the Applicant's Attorney of Record via email. /S/ Logan J. Day
on behalf of Phillip Streby | Save the Nickel Plate, Inc. | info@savethenickelplate.org