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James B. Durand
1112 Santa Fe Ave
Davis Junction, IL 61020
815-494-9418

May 14, 2017

Ken Blodgett
Surface Transportation Board
Docket # FD 35952
395 E Street, SW
Washington, D.C. 20423-0001

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Dear Mr. Blodgett:

I have read the information sheet regarding the GLBT application. I noticed something in particular on which I wish to comment. From the information page on the website:

“What does “legal merits” mean? By law, GLBT must show that building and operating the proposed rail line is not inconsistent with the public convenience and necessity (PC&N). In applying the PC&N standard, the STB looks at the overall benefits to freight transportation that would be achieved, as well as many other economic and operational factors. The STB will also consider environmental factors. Based on its findings, the STB determines whether to grant or deny the application.”

I latched onto “public convenience and necessity (PC&N)”. Based on these factors alone, it would seem denial by STB is a slam dunk. The proposed route cuts directly thru the village in which we reside, less than a mile from our homes. It intersects three roadways in close vicinity, including a major highway (Illinois Route 72). Thousands of people use all three of these roads every day. And don’t discount the two country roads, particularly Big Mound. It is our bypass route when a train is blocking the east-west tracks that already split the village. This occurs many times on a weekly basis.

Convenience would be completely jeopardized, in addition to the health and safety of approximately 2400 people living in Davis Junction. Many of us travel to the Rockford or Rochelle areas (each located east of Davis Junction) for work on a daily basis or for frequent errands such as shopping, professional appointments, or routine medical visits. **More importantly, when there is an urgent or emergency medical need, Rockford or Rochelle are the primary destinations. Going to either of these cities requires us to travel east from our homes, meaning crossing the proposed GLB tracks each time.** Given the proposed frequency of the train traffic, this would pose a serious threat to our health and safety, let alone being severely “inconvenienced”. Imagine you or one of your loved ones lying in an ambulance, going to the emergency room where minutes matter, waiting for a train to pass.

To be clear, I cannot voice strongly enough my opposition to the proposed GLB railroad. I understand there may be economic benefits to some people or corporations, but it is not “necessary”, and it most certainly is “inconsistent with the public convenience”.

Thank you in advance for your help.

Sincerely,

James B. Durand