

Linda K. Geishert
3163 Partridge Lane
Belvidere IL 61008

October 29, 2016

Dave Navecky, Surface Transportation Board
Docket No. FD 35952
395 E. Street SW
Washington, DC 20423-0001

Re: GLB proposed eminent domain project Finance Docket #35952, if this railroad is approved, it will negatively impact 150 acres of Winnebago County, Illinois prime farmland owned by my family since the 1950's. This farmland is fertile soil that has been producing crops in the heartland of America for generations. Our Montague Road land will be swallowed up by the train tracks on both sides of the road and also divided on a diagonal by the proposed train tracks, causing a parcel of land to be inaccessible by farm machinery needed to plant and harvest the crops. The following quote from the website agr.state.il.us defines Illinois' prime farmland: *"Much of Illinois is comprised of fertile flat loess, left behind by glaciers and wind millions of years ago. About 89 percent of the state's cropland is considered prime farmland, ranking the state third nationally in total prime farmland acreage. Prime farmland is important because it provides an environmentally sound base for crop production."* In addition, the same website defines and boasts of the transportation system that is already in place and working within the state: *"Illinois has a competitive edge over many other states due to its central location and superior transportation system. More than 2,000 miles of interstate highway and 34,500 miles of other state highway make trucking of goods fast and efficient. Chicago is home to the largest rail gateway in the nation, connecting eastern and western United States. The state boasts some 1,100 airports, landing areas and heliports, including Chicago's O'Hare International, through which more than 65 million travelers pass annually. Illinois' 1,118 miles of navigable waterways, including the Illinois and Mississippi rivers, make barge traffic an excellent option for shipment of grain to the Gulf of Mexico."*

Not only is prime farmland at issue. Additionally, we have two family homes located on Montague Road within 1/10 mile of the proposed tracks. Quality of life will be greatly impacted by the noise produced by trains moving at 70 mph. Vibration caused by trains at such speeds will rattle windows and potentially damage the limestone basement and plaster walls. In addition, an overpass proposed for Montague Road will be directly in front of the homes, destroying the esthetics of this beautiful rural area and negatively effecting the resale market value of the homes. If GLB is granted eminent domain, the resulting impact to the area will be devastating to my family financially as no buyer would be interested in homes this close to railroad tracks and an overpass. If GLB is granted eminent domain, the prime farmland in northern Illinois will be decreased and never again used to produce crops. With a superior transportation system already in place, the reduction of prime farmland, and so much at stake for our family and other families, how could the Great Lakes Basin Railroad benefit anyone other than the investors behind the project? Therein lies the question.

Sincerely,



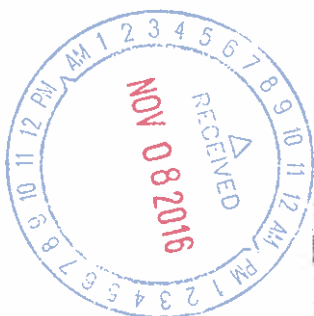
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