

Judith E. Connolly
3275 Hayes Rd.
Rochelle, IL 61068
815-562-6433
connollyjj@hotmail.com

April 19, 2017

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

Dear Mr. Blodgett:

The Great Lakes Basin Railroad is not needed. Not a single railroad has publicly stated that it will use the proposed toll tracks. Union Pacific and Norfolk Southern Railway have publicly stated that they are not interested, and CREATE, a \$4.4 billion project is already improving the efficiency of rail traffic through Chicago. As you may have read in the April 10, 2017 *Time* magazine:

“A major fix is already under way. An ongoing project – Chicago Region Environmental and Transportation Efficiency Program (CREATE), a \$4.4 billion public-private partnership – is designed to untie the train lines and allow the rail network to operate more efficiently. So far, 28 completed projects have increased capacity by adding rail lines, removing tracks from street level by creating overpasses and underpasses, and separating freight and commuter trains.”

I do understand, however, that the task of the STB is to evaluate environmental effects, both human and natural, of the GLBT Railroad.

Our home is in northern Lee County, Illinois, and a quarter mile east of U. S. Rt. 39, where Hayes Road dead ends. Do we enjoy hearing traffic roar and seeing vehicles speed by night and day? No. Do we understand that the highway was a Federal Dept. of Transportation project designed to provide safety and convenience for motorists who would otherwise have to travel the outdated, two-lane U. S. Rt. 51? Yes. Was this construction project a money-maker for the U. S. government? No.

If the GLBT is granted permission to build, the proposed route as shown on most maps would trap our home and the neighbor's house across the road between Rt. 39 and the tracks. We shudder to think of what would happen in case of an emergency.

Also, no one would purchase our home because it would be between a major highway and railroad tracks that could have 110 mile-long trains traveling 70 mph per day.

Again, according to the map, the trains and tracks would pass over a BP pipeline that was laid in 1946 and that runs through a farm field on the north side of Hayes Rd. and continues on to Rochelle. That pipeline would be impacted by the vibrations of those freight trains and therefore would create a tremendous safety hazard.

We have tiles in our field that direct water from the field to the creek to improve crop production. Those tiles cannot withstand the force and weight of the freight trains.

Loss of productive land, twenty-four acres per one mile of track, would mean loss of tax dollars to entities supported by those taxes. Other people and businesses would see their tax bills go up in order to provide for the difference.

Just one story/photo of a train derailment is enough to make us all say that we don't need trains carrying fuel and chemicals through our rural area. Available money should be spent repairing the unsafe rails and bridges that we already have.

In 1860, when James Buchanan was President, Theodore Judah, an engineer who had built railroads in the East and Midwest, spoke with the President about a railroad to California through barren and uninhabited lands. This railroad would carry settlers, the products they would need, and the Army to protect them.

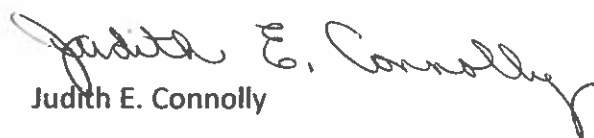
In 2017, when Donald Trump is President, Frank Patton, who has never built a railroad, and other investors ask permission of the STB to build a toll track. This 260-mile project would go through populated areas and destroy land, livelihoods, homes, and the environment forever. No matter what anyone says, the GLBR is a private, for-profit project.

So often, we find that people are interested in only what affects them directly. You are discovering, however, that people not living in the path of the tracks, government bodies, fire and police departments, conservation districts, school districts, people from all walks of life are opposed to the GLBR plan.

I join thousands of other in requesting a "no build" on the GLBR proposal.

Thanks you.

Sincerely,


Judith E. Connolly



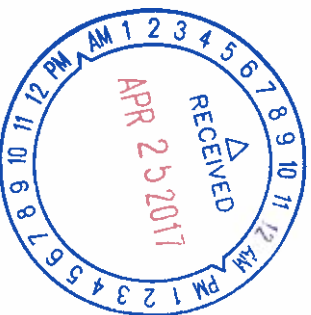
Judith Eileen Connolly
3275 Hayes Rd
Rochelle IL 61068-9537

CAROL STREAM IL 6001

20 APR 2017 PM 8 1



WPA POSTERS
FOREVER/USA



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

20423-0001

