

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

I am a profession engineer in the state of Wisconsin and have constructed many transportation projects in Wisconsin, Illinois, Iowa, Minnesota, and Missouri. The projects include small country roads to interstate projects to Army Corp of Engineer lock and dam projects on the Mississippi and Wisconsin River to maintain a navigable channel as well as hydroelectric and solar power projects. I am also a long time member of the American Society of Professional Engineers. I have learned and witnessed that our infrastructure is degrading and we need to maintain it to make it safer and more efficient but when doing so we need to do it in a professional and environmentally responsible manner following our engineer best practices.

When I looked at this proposed GLB Rail project from Indiana to Milton, WI I was concerned by the proposed route and the impact it would have on our farmers and farm land as well as many others.

We have an abundance of infrastructure that has been degrading and neglected. We live in a world with a mindset that instead of fixing we replace with new. This is not in line with our government push in being more environmentally conscious. We have to take a serious look at reusing and replace parts and pieces to become safer and more efficient or thinking outside of the box. The proposed route is burning up farmland and exposing many innocent citizens to a future of safety risks, lost income or resale value, noise, vibration, traffic delays, reduced quality of life and many others. All of this is being proposed thinking that it will affect the least amount of people and be easier and cheaper to get approval. Has the impact of the reduced amount of food on peoples table been looked at over the life of the farm? Why not propose or at least consider fixing the problem in Chicago with outdated inefficient infrastructure or proposing an outside the box or even multiple options that were looked at.

Below is the Obligation of an Engineer that spells out how to view this project in to most professional and responsible manner. **The obligation of an engineer is to serve humanity by making the best use of Earth's precious wealth.** As this project is discussed many questions must be asked to whether the proposed route is using this prime, precious nonrenewable farmland for what it was created for. In my mind and quoted by UW Agriculture Professors, Rock County Wisconsin arguably has the best farm ground in the Country and building this rail through it would be a shame and would not uphold the Obligation of an Engineer.

Obligation

I am an Engineer. In my profession I take deep pride. To it, I owe solemn obligations.

Since the Stone Age, human progress has been spurred by the engineering genius. Engineers have made usable nature's vast resources of material and energy for Humanity's [Mankind's] benefit. Engineers have vitalized and turned to practical use the principles of science and the means of technology. Were it not for this heritage of accumulated experience, my efforts would be feeble.

As an Engineer, I pledge to practice integrity and fair dealing, tolerance and respect, and to uphold devotion to the standards and the dignity of my profession, conscious always that my skill carries with it the obligation to serve humanity by making the best use of Earth's precious wealth.

As an Engineer, [in humility and with the need for Divine guidance,] I shall participate in none but honest enterprises. When needed, my skill and knowledge shall be given without reservation for the public good. In the performance of duty and in fidelity to my profession, I shall give the utmost.

Below are options that I recommend the STB and GLB consider when determining a resolution to the safety hazards and inefficiencies of transporting by rail through Chicago.

Option 1 – I request that the STB and GLB consider analyzing an option to upgrade the infrastructure in Chicago to make the rail line safer and more efficient.

Option 2 - I request that the STB and GLB consider bypassing Chicago by utilizing Lake Michigan and/or transporting by barges rather than building a rail to bypass Chicago. Also consider by tractor trailer. Although barge transport creates another step it may reduce the overall environmental impact and still provide a more efficient means of transportation.

Option 3 – Utilize land that is not prime farmland and may already be owned by the government to run the rail on. Use as many existing rail beds on the route.

Option 4 – If a route from Indiana north into Wisconsin is deemed to be the best option, hold the Owner to the highest standards for safety, engineering, and technology. I would also require the rail owners to communicate, work with, and negotiate a dollar value to provide to the local communities for the upgrades needed in their infrastructure to support a rail of this size in their neighborhoods. This would help minimize the impact to the community.

- If option 4 is still considered viable, I request that the STB and GLB analyze the loss in food and the amount of people that will be affected by the loss of farm land annually. I request that the STB and GLB calculate and evaluate the location and design of this rail, if built, to minimize the annual quantity of food and land loss.

Robert Vyvyan

Robert J. Vyvyan, P.E.

Civil Engineer & Farmer

vyvyanrob@hotmail.com