



ILLINOIS HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
STATE OF ILLINOIS

John Anthony
STATE REPRESENTATIVE • 75TH DISTRICT

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Dear Friends,

Thank you to everyone who has contacted me to share your concerns about the proposed Great Lakes Basin Railway project. I appreciate you taking the time to make your voice heard. Your feedback has been much appreciated. I regret that I am unable to be with you at the meeting tonight because I am in Springfield today and tomorrow attending the House of Representatives legislative session.

Let me make clear first and foremost that private property rights are a very important issue to me. I am opposed to the use of eminent domain to take away land from property owners, particularly our farmers. Grundy County farmland is prime soil, among the very best in the world. It can never be replaced.

A few of the problems that may be created if this project moves forward include the closure of many rural roads; making safe travel to the fields take longer and more expensive; severed farm parcels that maybe too small to be farmed due to size or parcels left landlocked; relocation of homes and/or farm buildings; damage to or destruction of wetlands; floodplain locations may be destroyed or new ones created; as well as surface drainage and field tile drainage that may be lessened or destroyed.

Other concerns include impact on wildlife, and public safety concerns with respect to emergency response services, and the risk of derailment of tank cars with hazardous waste spills which would contaminate surrounding fields and possibly the aquifers below.

Please be assured I am NOT in support of the railway project as it stands right now. The proposal is still early in the process, with the most important aspect being community input from local residents like you. My priority is to ensure that every property owner who might be affected has the opportunity to make their voice heard. I will be a voice for you as well.

Finally, it should be emphasized that Great Lakes Basin Transportation, Inc. is a corporate entity, not a state government initiative. In recent weeks, the federal Surface Transportation Board (STB) has conducted public meetings throughout the region, seeking local input. Next, the STB is expected to complete an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), a two- to three-year process, and then decide if it will approve or deny the project, or change the route.

Because this is a federal – not state – transportation project, I do not have a vote on any step of the process. However, as your State Representative, I share your concerns and will continue to make those concerns known to our federal officials to ensure your voice is heard.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "John Anthony".

John Anthony
State Representative, 75th District