

ATTN: Docket # FD 35952

June 12, 2016

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

Mr. Navecky,

I want to state my opinion that the GLB railroad is a mistake, and it should not continue any further through the process. I have numerous concerns about this railroad for the area, but one of my biggest concerns is the abuse of the use of eminent domain for this railroad. I completely understand the need and purpose for eminent domain when it comes to developing transportation; however, Frank Patton wants to use eminent domain for his own financial purposes. Frank Patton and his investors are looking for a federally backed "land grab" at the expense of all the landowners. The intended purpose for eminent domain is not to legally allow private enterprise to take land from American citizens for the purpose of financial gain. If this railroad was federally funded and backed, there would be much more information about the exact intended purposes for this railroad, and the train companies that plan to use it. This entire project has been shrouded in secrecy explaining exactly the purpose for this line. Why does a private company get to do this, when a federal initiative would never have this convenience? Further more I believe that fast tracking this project and waiving the six-month notification period was an error on the part of the STB. For the following reasons, I respectfully request that the STB cease any further action on this project.

The fact is this project has a lot of unanswered questions. Why does it need a 50-foot easement? Why does it need the largest rail yard in the United States? Why can't the railroad disclose their investors? Why are there so many questions that seem to be unanswered about this project? This GLB project is strictly a commercial venture. In order to receive eminent domain, this project needs to show a greater advantage to the citizens than disadvantage. The citizens are stating very loudly all the disadvantages to this project, yet when we ask what the advantages are to this project, we get vague answers that are backed by a lot of opinions and very few facts. It is almost like we are being told, "Don't worry about it; just trust me. It will be useful when it is all said and done." Well, I don't want to trust someone else's vision; especially when that vision is shrouded in non-disclosure agreements that do not fully reveal the whole picture.

I am also concerned about dropping property values on homes. One major negative consequence of the GLB railroad will be the inevitable dropping value of my home. This will be happening to numerous citizens that may not be compensated for their property because the railroad does not directly touch their property, but the railroad will still cause their homes to depreciate. I understand this is a necessary consequence for any time a railroad or highway is built, but the mass size of this line will cause it to affect a great number of people. People that thought they built in the country for peace and quiet. This brings me to the next point. Frank Patton keeps saying how there will be minimal disturbance to people because the railroad is going through the country. This translates to people in the country that because we are in the country we are less important and should just handle the disturbance. I am very concerned if this railroad is planned for the most efficient route for its purpose. Why does this railroad have to stretch so far out of its way to make it from Wisconsin to Indiana? Why are farm ground and country homes so much less important than other property?

Another concern I have about this railroad is its public convenience, which is a necessary component for eminent domain. As of right now, Frank Patton promises economic growth because of the railroad. He has stated up to 110 trains could use this track per day, and it will boost the local economy in so many ways. As I am sure you are aware, there are many people that do not want this railroad, and if it is built, there will be numerous people watching the railroad either succeed or fail at all the promises Frank Patton has made. What happens when these promises aren't delivered? What happens when the railroad companies that publicly announce they want nothing to do with this line do not use it, and no one else uses it either? Who will be to blame? People will be pointing fingers if this railroad fails, and who will take the fall? I would think a business prospective must be much more clear and proven before something as drastic as eminent domain be granted to a private businessman. If eminent domain is granted to Frank Patton and his dreams, what stops it from being used excessively for any business endeavor in the future? We have to be very careful the way eminent domain is granted to individuals versus government enterprises. It is one thing when the federal or state government is building something for the great good, but it is very different when the government decides it can force one private citizen to sell his or her property to another private citizen for financial gain; a sale that can negatively affect the landowner's way of life for not only the immediate future, but for many years to come. In conclusion, this "land grab" should not be supported by the federal government by providing this private investor with eminent domain.

The above provided information is what led me to the conclusion that the proposed GLB project is inconsistent with the public convenience and necessity. It was insufficiently vetted before starting the approval process. I respectfully request that the STB cease work on this project. Individually, or as part of a group, I will fight the GLB proposed plan using all options available, including Congress, my vote at the ballot box, and the judicial system.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Elaine Gerber". The ink is dark and the signature is fluid, with a large 'E' and a long, sweeping 'G'.

Elaine Gerber

960 E. Goodfarm Rd.

Gardner IL 60424

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960 E. Goodfarm Rd.

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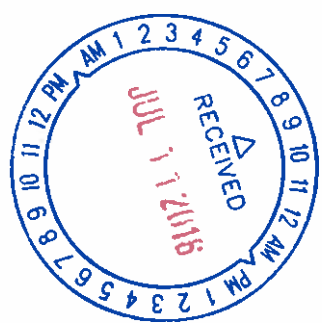


Tim Gerber
5580 E Stonewall Rd
Gardner, IL 60424

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