FI-17979

Surface Transportation Board:
Attention Anne K. Quinlan:
March 31, 2009

Received the enclosed mail from your office. It is very vague and really doesn't supply any information. What proceeding is the Surface Transportation Board instituting and what is the petition and exemption sought by ARRC?
Is this some petition that needs people to sign it? Nobody I've spoken with knows anything about it.

So on the advice of my attorney, I have responded to your letter.

Also on the advice of my attorney, and at the risk of being redundant I am to state once again the people of Alaska and the people of the United States do not need this rail line. Three miles away across Cook Inlet is a fine port with rail access that has served Alaska perfectly well for decades.

The Mat Su Borough built this port without public approval. They spent a ton of taxpayer money and picked up an additional 20% from local property owners so that they could do something important and build a port. It was job security for a bunch of small town bureaucrats at America's expense.

Now they are stuck with this white elephant port that nobody uses. The addition cost of a rail line at a time when the United States is sliding toward bankruptcy is not going to change that.

I don't know what ARRC is doing; I do know that some of the locals at one of the public meetings were trying to build up some enthusiasm – maybe there would be some tourism with the rail spur. Maybe warehouse storage and local small manufacturing. The representative from ARRC that was at the meeting finally stood up and said "Listen this is not going to be a benefit to your community, it is basically a rail line that goes to nowhere."

I believe that is closer to the truth.

Respectfully:
Gary Thompson
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