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Docket #:	FD	-35952	- -
Subject: *	Safety concerns for emergency responders		
First Name: *	John		
Middle Name:	F.		
Last Name: *	Rindfleisch		
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Group/Affiliation:			
Message:			



Letter to Dave Navecky Surface Transportation Board.doc

CLINTON FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT

SINCE 1962

TOWNSHIPS of BRADFORD and CLINTON - VILLAGE of CLINTON
ROCK COUNTY

**PO BOX 153 145 OGDEN AVENUE
CLINTON, WISCONSIN 53525-0153**

CLINTON FIRE DEPARTMENT SINCE 1897

ADMINISTRATOR/FIRE CHIEF/ EMS CO-COORDINATOR
JOHN F. RINDFLEISCH

CLINTON EMS SINCE 1979

EMS CO-COORDINATOR
JIM GRENAWALT

Dave Navecky
Surface Transportation Board
Docket #FD 35952

Dear Mr. Navecky,

This letter is intended to explain the concerns that the Clinton Fire Protection District has with the buiding of a new railroad by the GLB within the area we protect.

At their April meeting the Clinton Fire Protection District Board of Trustees voted to support the opposition to the new railroad based on the safety of their Firefighters, EMT's, residents and visitors of the District.

The Clinton Fire Protection District is primarily a volunteer/paid per call department. Our area is comprised by the Towns of Bradford & Clinton along with the Village of Clinton, in all 72 square miles. The proposed railroad dissects the Fire District from the SE corner to the NW corner. Access to emergencies on ALL railroads is extremely limited if not impossible based on placing them as far away from populated areas and roadways. Located along the proposed construction are 9 at grade crossings, 2 private/farm crossing and 4 overpasses. There are contradicting parts of the Great Lakes Basin documents that concern the District in regards to proposed crossings. One document lists all crossings in our area and one states it's safer to eliminate or minimize at grade crossings. Eliminating crossings would severely limit our access and response times.

Nationwide Fire and EMS Departments are experiencing a decline in available firefighters and EMT's especially during the daytime. Departments are reporting that they are understaffed, underequipped and undertrained to handle a possible disaster that a railroad could bring. Our department is experiencing the same difficulties as I have mentioned.

Railroads are not new to this area and we currently have two railroads that run through our District. There are about four trains per day on these railroads with some higher traffic at certain times of the year but nothing like we have seen in publications that Great Lakes Basin has on their website. We have had incidents along these current lines. These incidents include, traffic accidents, derailments and grass/wildland fires.

Just one derailment with hazardous materials could devastate a community placing emergency responders and residents in a life or death situation.

In any emergency response times are critical if not the meaning of life or death. In a cardiac arrest event a patient needs quick response from all levels of emergency care if they are to have any chance of survival. Recent advancements in our area have brought the survival rate for cardiac patients walking out of the hospital up to almost 40%. Much of this is due to a quick response from local EMS. The survivable outcome for ANY medical emergencies reflects on the quick response from local EMS. In the event of a working fire, statistics show the fire will double every 30 seconds. With 95% of our area rural we are hauling our water with tender truck and filling from water sources many miles from the fire. When figuring how much water is needed to fight these fires turn-around time is very critical. When we have to drive up to 10 miles one way any delay could be costly or worse, fatal.

August 4, 2016

Our response times to incidents in the Clinton Fire Protection District are some of the best in the nation. In 2014 our department received an ISO (Insurance Services Organization) rating equal to some full-time departments across the country. This rating has placed our department in the top 3000 out of 49000 departments across the US. The ISO rating is based on many factors but response time are on the list and delays at crossings or having to use alternate routes could change this.

In concluding our safety concerns are based on the following items, safety at crossings and response delays.

The Clinton Fire Protection District along with our mutual aid departments are understaffed, underequipped and undertrained for a major rail disaster.

Sincerely,

John F. Rindfleisch
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