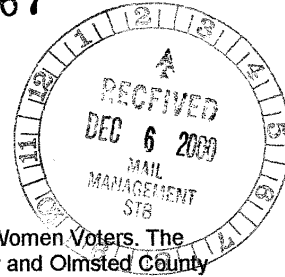




ROCHESTER LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS

001767

200973



My name is Vera Dougher and I am representing the Rochester League of Women Voters. The Rochester League did a study of the DM&E issue as it pertains to Rochester and Olmsted County in February 1999. The result of this study was to strongly support the no build option.

We believe that this project will have serious consequences for this city and county. Much time, planning and money has been spent to revive what was becoming a crumbling downtown. Due to these efforts, you now witness a vibrant city. Groups have been formed to help revitalize neighborhoods. They have worked hard to deal with problems typical of older areas in a city. Now, their neighborhoods are being threatened by a privately owned business that tells them that their concerns are beyond their control.

We are finding the DEIS to be inadequate. It is too long and difficult to read. The paging system slows down any desired referencing. In Volumes VII A and B there are no page numbers. The document is incomplete and does not represent the true facts that are of great concern to Rochester. For example, the Federal Medical Center disputes your statement concerning vibration and it's security fencing. The fire department has serious questions about the estimates for stopping at railroad crossings to wait for trains.

When the DEIS talks about concerns that exist here, there are, sadly, seldom any solutions to the concerns stated. Take the example of vibration on housing in Rochester. According to the DEIS there are 254 structures in Rochester that would be affected by vibration. Nowhere does the DEIS give assurance or make recommendations that the owners quality of life issues are going to be addressed. The DM&E has told these owners that it has no intention of buying their property. It is not fair to think that these structures will just be allowed to deteriorate over time with no help from the railroad.

These same structures/people will also be bombarded with noise levels above the accepted level of 65 decibels. (Nowhere does the DEIS discuss the double whammy these individuals will endure.)

The DEIS says that the overall impacts to business and industrial land use are expected to be positive. However, negative impacts, potentially significant may occur to certain businesses adjacent to the rail line. Listen carefully to representatives from Mayo Clinic, the Hotel industry, and Pemstar. Again, there is no suggestion or recommendation as to what can be done to alleviate these businesses that will be negatively impacted. Is it fair that one business be allowed to harm another in such a manner? Do you consider the loss and impact on these businesses when you are considering the economic impact of the increased train traffic on Rochester?

The STB also needs adequate time to develop some solutions to the problems that have been raised in these meetings and to respond to those raising these issues.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Testimony given November 16, 2000 to the Surface Transportation Board at the Mayo Civic Center.

ENTERED
Office of the Secretary

DEC 12 2000

**Part of
Public Record**

**ENVIRONMENTAL
DOCUMENT**