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November 9, 2000

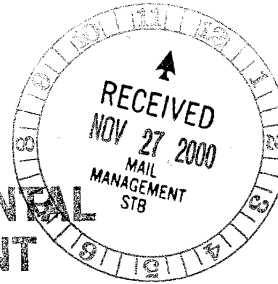
Office of the Secretary
Case Control Unit
STB Finance Docket No. 33407
Surface Transportation Board
1925 K. Street NW
Washington DC 20423-0001

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Ladies and Gentlemen:

Based on the draft Environmental Impact Statement, I am pleased to see improved safety advantages of the DM&E Railroad project. I encourage issuance of a permit on preferred route, Alternative C.

Many rural grade crossings need to be brought to modern traffic safety standards. This project will enhance that safety protection of all of the communities, and I am in support the project. I also enjoy that crossings will be blocked for a shorter amount of time so emergency vehicle access will actually be quickened. I work in the medical community, so I have studied the safety issue and feel crossings could be blocked for a shorter time because of faster moving trains. With grade crossing enhancements and the increased speed, emergency services shouldn't be a safety concern. Additionally, train crew safety will improve with a new rail infrastructure and modern equipment to include signaling and control systems, modern communication systems that will end the "dark territories" for train crews (which, if they had been in place today, could have prevented the tragic crew death and severe injury accident recently in Brookings, SD).

Please approve the application by DM&E to construct the preferred route and improve the public and employee safety conditions as provided through a much need transportation system addressed in paragraph IIA of the DEIS.

Sincerely,

Sharon R. Schaefer