

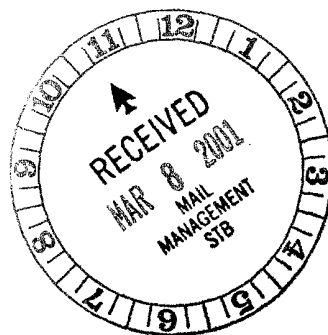


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Advocating New Directions For Public Education

March 1, 2001

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



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Office of the Secretary

MAR - 8 2001

Part of
Public Record

Members of the Surface Transportation Board:

The South Dakota Education Association has owned its office building located at 411 E. Capitol Avenue for nearly fifty years. The building is situated in close proximity to the railroad tracks. As employees of the organization we will be affected by the DM&E railroad's proposed expansion plan. We do not oppose the expansion of the railroad. However, we strongly believe that a bypass is needed.

The reasons we oppose heavy rail traffic through downtown Pierre are the following:

- Some employees must commute across the rail tracks to work. Currently, there are times when rail traffic slows or stops car traffic for extended periods during peak traffic times. The increased traffic flow will significantly increase the problem.
- The entry way to the parking lot used by most of our employees is next to the rail tracks. Currently, during school times the traffic is backed up a block in each direction. Increased rail traffic will significantly exasperate the problem.
- We use the King's Inn Convention Center, the Ramkota Inn, and the Days Inn for many meetings each year. Increased rail traffic will greatly affect the meetings and will be very detrimental to the hundreds of people that our association houses at these hotels each year.
- Between Pierre and Ft. Pierre four public schools, public parks, the city pool, the Boys and Girls Club, and the Community & Youth Involved Center sit within one block of the railroad tracks. Our children must go back and forth across the tracks each day. We consider the safety of our children to be in jeopardy with increased rail traffic.
- The environmental pollution, noise pollution, and general transportation problems plus the detrimental affects on river recreation caused by increased rail traffic will impact the quality of life in Pierre making it much less desirable.

Please require that any authorization permitted for DM&E unit coal trains be required to bypass the cities of Pierre and Fort Pierre.

Surface Transportation Board
March 1, 2001
Page 2

We appreciate your consideration of this request and thank you in advance for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Bra Seiv

Laura Johnson-Paine

Char Gatzje

Karen Fulk

Janet Wilson

Soren Pal

Chaelin Wickley

Robert H. [unclear]

Debbie [unclear]

Ann Plaster

Jerry Wilson

Paul M. Conkle

Elaine Roberts

Sheri Weckmann

Dorothy Paul

Jeff Peterson

Employees of the South Dakota Education Association

Cc: Honorable Gary L. Drewes, Mayor City of Pierre
Rick Jorgensen, CEO Pierre Area Chamber of Commerce
Honorable Tom Daschle, Minority Leader United States Senate
Honorable Tim Johnson, United States Senate
Honorable John Thune, United States House of Representatives