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UNITED STATES
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

February 12, 2002

COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION & THE WORKFORCE
COMMITTEE ON SCIENCE



Mr Vernon A. Williams
Secretary
Surface Transportation Board
1925 K Street NW #840
Washington, D.C. 20423

204759
ENTERED
Office of the Secretary

Rc: STB Finance Docket No. 34040
STB Finance Docket No. 33908

FEB 13 2002

Part of
Public Record

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Dear Mr. Williams:

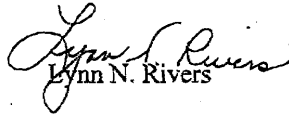
I am writing with concerns regarding the above-referenced STB decisions, involving a proposal for an inter-modal truck and rail depot on the Detroit River. Though this site is not in my district, many of my constituents are concerned that the approval of this proposal will have grave implications for all of southeast Michigan.

The applicant, Riverview-Trenton Railroad, has purchased the former McLouth Steel Mill, including property along the banks of the Detroit River. RTRR had repeatedly claimed, as late as November of 2000, that it has no intention of using this site for railroad activity. However, once Wayne County expressed interest in taking this site for public use, RTRR immediately filed an action with the STB for protection as a federally regulated rail carrier. It appears that STTR is using some unused railroad tracks on a 75-acre piece of property as a justification for a federal exemption from state and local zoning control. Should plans for the intermodal terminal continue, the surrounding communities would be faced with a dramatic increase in truck traffic, noise and pollution and such plans would easily overwhelm the existing local infrastructure. This proposal conflicts with longstanding efforts by the state and local communities to convert available property along the Detroit River to mixed use or non-industrial uses to improve quality of life for its citizens. Such goals are evidenced by its designation as an American Heritage River and the recent passage by the US House of Representatives of the Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge Establishment Act.

I urge the STB to revoke RTRR's notice of exemption in STB Finance Docket No. 33908 and to deny its petition for exemption in Finance Docket No. 34040. Not only has RTRR misrepresented its intention for the property along the Detroit River, it is not clear to me that they

should qualify for any state and local exemptions as a railroad. The local communities have repeatedly expressed their concerns regarding this project, and the apparent threats to public health and quality of life cannot be ignored. Thank you in advance for your assistance. I appreciate your attention to this matter, and I look forward to your response.

Sincerely,


Lynn N. Rivers

LNR:mcf