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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

PETER A. DeFAZIO
4TH DISTRICT, OREGON

TRANSPORTATION AND
INFRASTRUCTURE
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NATIONAL PARKS, FORESTS, AND PUBLIC LANDS

July 23, 2008

The Honorable Anne K. Quinlan
Acting Secretary
Surface Transportation Board
395 E St. SW
Washington, DC 20423

Re. Docket No AB-515 (Sub-No. 2X), *Central Oregon & Pacific Railroad, Inc -- Abandonment and Discontinuance -- in Coos, Douglas, and Lane Counties, OR (Coquille to Vaughn)*

Dear Secretary Quinlan:

I am writing to you regarding the Abandonment Application filed on July 14, 2008 by the Central Oregon & Pacific Railroad (CORP) for the Coos Bay Line. I have concerns with the proposed abandonment and I request that the Surface Transportation Board hold a public hearing in Eugene, Oregon to discuss the impact that the loss of rail service would have to this rural region.

The proposed abandonment of the Coos Bay Line is a major concern for my congressional district, particularly the south coast of Oregon. For many decades, the rail line has provided a crucial transportation connection between towns such as Coquille, Coos Bay, North Bend, Reedsport, and the rest of the United States. The area is not located on an Interstate highway, does not have easy access to I-5, and includes several major employers who depend on the rail line. Any harm to these employers from an abandonment of the rail line will necessarily mean the loss of jobs for local citizens. When local citizens lose their rail-dependent jobs there is a great likelihood that additional businesses, such as retail and restaurants, will be adversely affected. In short, there is a ripple effect from the lumber and other businesses that depend on the rail line.

Due to the far-reaching consequences of CORP's proposed abandonment, I respectfully request that the Surface Transportation Board hold a public hearing in Eugene, Oregon so that community leaders, employers, and all local citizens can voice their concerns. This meeting would provide the Board with more information regarding the broad impacts of the proposed abandonment. There is widespread and significant community interest in the future of the rail line and I envision a large turnout at any such meeting.

Sincerely,


Peter A. DeFazio
Member of Congress