



Jean Cowan
State Representative
House District 10 – Central Coast

223014

July 19, 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 the member of the Oregon House of Representatives from House District 10. My legislative district includes rural Lane County, including several areas impacted by the proposed abandonment of the Coos Bay Rail Line by CORP. Both as a representative of the impacted area and as Vice-Chair of the House Rural Policy Committee, I have concerns about the negative impacts of the CORP's proposal to abandon the line.

The proposed abandonment of the Coos Bay rail line of the Central Oregon & Pacific Railroad ("CORP") is a major concern for my constituents and the entire southwestern Oregon region. For many decades, the rail line has provided a crucial transportation connection between towns such as Coquille, Coos Bay, North Bend, Reedsport, and Cushman (Florence area) 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. Of course, 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 am respectfully requesting that the Surface Transportation Board hold a public hearing here in Oregon so that community leaders, employers, and local citizens can voice their concerns. This meeting would provide the Surface Transportation Board with more information regarding the broad impacts of the proposed abandonment. A field hearing in Oregon would be of great benefit.

Please consider holding the hearing in Eugene. It is the western end of the line, and is easily accessible from the service region, and has good air access.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jean Cowan".

Jean Cowan