



Ohio Rail Development Commission

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March 28, 2003

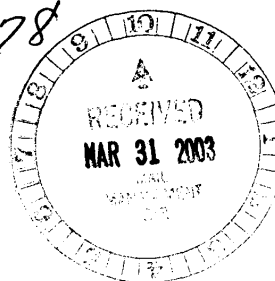
Via UPS Overnight Express

Mr. Vernon A. Williams
Secretary
Surface Transportation Board
Mercury Building
1925 "K" Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20423

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**RE: Docket AB-55 (Sub. No. 622X)
CSX Abandonment in Pike County, Ohio**

Dear Mr. Williams:

I am writing to request that the Surface Transportation Board (STB) gives proper consideration to the potential future adverse impacts that the abandonment of the 4.1 mile long Teays Industrial Track may have on the national defense of the nation.

The Ohio Rail Development Commission (ORDC) is the state of Ohio agency responsible for promoting and preserving Ohio's rail freight system. As such, ORDC is involved in many of Ohio's economic development initiatives. In the case of the Teays Industrial Track abandonment, the promotion of economic development and national defense may overlap.

The reason the Teays Industrial track was built in 1952 was to serve the US government's Piketon Uranium Enrichment facility. The uranium plant was located between two mainline tracks of the predecessor railroads to the Norfolk Southern and CSX. Clearly the federal government recognized the value of dual rail service when it sited the plant. And clearly the rail traffic generated was sufficient to induce the two railroads to each build several miles of track and structures to serve the defense installation.

The Piketon plant has been privatized and significantly downsized in recent years. The facility as it stands now does not need dual rail service. However, it might be in the national interest to keep dual rail to the site to serve potential future developments. The new owner of the plant, the United States Energy Corporation (USEC), is in the process of investing \$50 million in its "Lead Cascade" project. USEC will be processing uranium for power plants around the world. This initial Lead Cascade project could be the precursor to a \$1 billion commercial uranium plant

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Mr. Williams/Page 2

project in the future. Such a strategic project could warrant the availability of dual rail access for economic as well as security reasons.

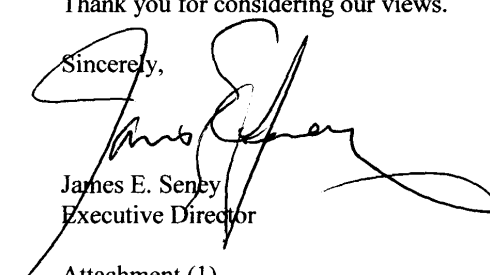
CSX has notified the Military Traffic Management Command Transportation Engineering Agency (MTMCTEA) about the planned abandonment. ORDC is not privy to whether or not the Teays track, or the Portsmouth to Columbus mainline the Teays track connects to (see attached map), is on the Strategic Rail Corridor Network.

ORDC understands that it has no formal standing to address national defense issues. But given what we have learned about the potential future economic development of the USEC Piketon plant, ORDC strongly urges the STB to meaningfully coordinate with the MTMCTEA to ensure that it has had time to fully evaluate the long term impacts of the CSX abandonment.

ORDC understands that the STB's exemption abandonment process operates on an effective but tight schedule. Given the current world situation, ORDC urges you not to let the process push a rush to judgement on an issue which may have an impact on our future security.

Thank you for considering our views.

Sincerely,



James E. Seney
Executive Director

Attachment (1)

C: Senator George V. Voinovich
Senator Mike Dewine
Congressman Ted Strickland
Natalie Rosenberg, CSX
MTMTEA, Railroads for National Defense
Greg Simonton, Southern Ohio Diversification Initiative
(All "C" copies with attachment)

