



State of Indiana

Senate

Senator Ed Charbonneau
 State House
 200 West Washington Street
 Indianapolis, Indiana 46204
 State House: (317) 232-9494
 E-mail: senator.charbonneau@iga.in.gov

Committees:
 Appropriations
 School Funding Subcommittee
 Environmental Affairs, Chair
 Health & Provider Services
 Tax & Fiscal Policy
 Rules & Legislative Procedure

June 22, 2016

Dave Navecky
 Surface Transportation Board
 Docket No. FD 35952
 395 E Street SW
 Washington, DC 20423-0001

Dear Mr. Navecky,

I am writing to express my concern and opposition to the rail project being proposed by the Great Lakes Basin Transportation, Inc. (GLBT) in Northwest Indiana. I am a firm believer in the free enterprise system but as time goes on and information becomes available it becomes clearer and clearer to me that this is a totally speculative proposal without a plan, without funding, without railroad partners and without concern for the potentially devastating impact it will have on the physical safety of Hoosiers as well as our environment.

The negative impacts are numerous and have the potential to do irreparable harm. As Chair of the Senate Environmental Committee I have spent a significant amount of time over the past four years addressing water policy in our State. Water has become one of the most serious issues we face locally, nationally and globally. The proposed railroad crosses all eight major watersheds and attending wetlands in the three county area. Serious potential exists for contamination of the waters of the State. The implications are devastating!

The physical land use of farms and rural residences would be changed in a negative manner. Most farms in northwest Indiana have a complex series of underground drains which will be damaged. These drains are private and are not maintained or regulated by any public agency. The natural surface drainage will be impeded and rerouted in an unknown manner. The use of center irrigation pivots on farmland will be limited and access to landlocked parcels will be restricted or not available.

The human environmental impact includes public safety issues due to numerous new surface rail crossings which would create longer response times for emergency responders. Additionally, the school districts involved will have many more at grade crossings to contend with thus endangering young lives. Noise and vibration will forever alter the serene rural environment that generations have enjoyed.

As I mentioned earlier, this project appears to be based upon nothing more than speculation devoid of any plan, funding or partners. It is unjustified. I strongly recommend the project not move forward until acceptance by those affected can be ascertained and that federal dollars not be spent needlessly on a project that does not have

proven transparent financial backing.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Great Lakes Basin Transportation Inc. LLC proposal. I would be more than happy to discuss my concerns further at your pleasure.

Best,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ed Charbonneau', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Ed Charbonneau

State Senator
District 5

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Indianapolis, Indiana 46204

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