

The Senate of The State of Texas

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Senator Carlos Uresti
District 19

#E1-2849
BAW

February 13, 2007

Ms. Rini Ghosh
Surface Transportation Board
Case Control Unit
Washington, DC 20403
STB Finance Docket No. 34284

Re: Project review under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, Review of Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement (SDEIS), Southwest Gulf Railroad, STB Docket No. 34284, Construction and Operation Exemption, Medina County, Texas (STB)

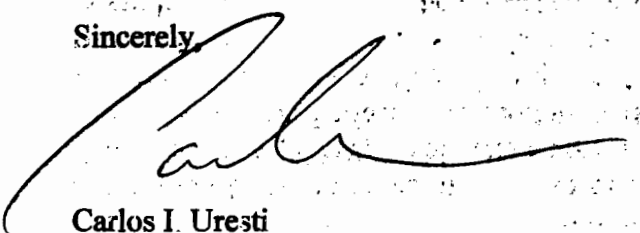
Dear Ms. Ghosh:

Maintaining the integrity of our local farming and ranching communities is a vital issue to Texas; and it is a mission of particular significance to me, and to the 23 counties I am privileged to serve in my State Senate District (SD19). This letter serves to endorse the recommendations on the proposed rail project submitted to the Surface Transportation Board (Board), by Texas State Historic Preservation Officer, Lawrence Oaks. I particularly support Mr. Oaks' emphasis on urging the Board to select whichever route will result in the least division of current agricultural lands, and to realign that route wherever possible to further reduce the impacts on my constituents' farmland operations.

I applaud the Board's cooperation with Texas state agencies, throughout the process of conducting the rural historic landscape study, to minimize the proposed project's impact on Texas' historic resources. I will continue to monitor the efforts to develop a route as functional as possible for the railroad while ensuring the least possible disruption of local farming and ranching communities.

Again, I appreciate your agency's participation in helping forge a win-win solution in Medina County, which may well serve as a template to guide other rural communities. I welcome ongoing communication regarding the rail routing and permitting process. If I can be of further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me, or my natural resources policy analyst Dr. J.A. Lazarus, at (512) 463-0119.

Sincerely,



Carlos I. Uresti

CIU/jal

cc: Mr. Jim Barden, Medina County Judge