

ATTN: Docket # FD-35952
 Surface Transportation Board
 Ken Blodgett,

December 30, 2016

We need to invalid or refute any value of the building of this rail. Patton states the railroad's primary mission is to handle long by-pass trains, but then states "that relatively few trains would operate from end to end over the proposed railroad." He states the railroad is a bypass around Chicago and then lists connections with other rail lines. Is he also going to add toll roads, electrical lines or pipelines along the rail route? When will he be required to submit a formal plan?

Patton talks about "improved velocity, reliability, capacity, and new revenue opportunities", while these words sound important he has no concrete evidence of any of them being true. Have any marketing studies been done to see if any Class One railroads are even interested in using this proposed line? Are there any freight carriers that have drafted any formal business proposals? What exactly are the new revenue opportunities he speaks of? Most of the land the track passes through are zoned for agricultural use and not business.

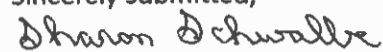
GLBT states "We initially considered extending the proposed railroad northward to a direct connection with the Grand Rapids Subdivision in the Michigan City area. The proposed alignment also would have required a difficult connection to the Norfolk Southern Chicago Line." A letter from Norfolk Southern dated December 2, 2016 states, "Norfolk Southern did not provide any input into the projections made by Great Lakes Transportation in its November 10, 2016 response to the STB. Further, and notwithstanding any projections by Great Lakes Basin Transportation to the contrary, Norfolk Southern reiterates its prior message to the STB that it has no plans to use the proposed route. Rather, Norfolk Southern anticipates that it will continue to use either the direct routes that Norfolk Southern currently operates or, for that matter, any of the numerous alternatives otherwise currently available to it. Therefore, to the extent the projections that Great Lake Basin Transportation made in its November 10, 2016 response include Norfolk Southern traffic, those projections are in error." What other information is in error on this project. Why build more when numerous are routes available.

When one route "was impractical, we (GLBT) realized we could make the connection using South Shore Freight's existing line, and the profile of that line is suitable for the traffic we EXPECT it would carry (primarily unit coal trains). He "expects" a lot. Where is the documentation? This does not reduce the cost and environmental impact of their project when rail carrying toxic chemicals, oil and coal still crosses the Rock River, Turtle Creek, Coon Creek, Kishwaukee River, Fox River, Illinois River, Kankakee River and also traverses prime farm land.

Has anyone studied and understood where all the oil, coal cars (other cargo) will "end up" from the cars that currently transport through Chicago? He claims it is taking 33 hours to go through Chicago to where? If the GLBT goes around Chicago taking 8 hours and then the rail turns back through Milwaukee to reload oil or cargo to ships or trucks for redistribution might that add up to 33 hours invalidating any time actually saved? How do we obtain this information? CREATE has also solved some of the congestion in Chicago.

My conclusion is GLBT is not solving any problems, just shifting the route, congestion, and risks to us. I don't understand how someone without a formal business plan is allowed to cause so many people so much uncertainty, anxiety and hardship. Landowners will be responsible for paying increased liability insurance with the rail dividing their property not GLBT.

Sincerely submitted,


 Sharon Schwalbe

2751 S. Paddock Rd

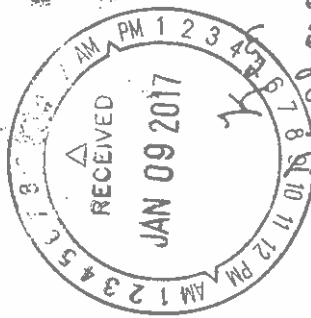
Beloit, WI 53511

608-362-6706

sschwalbe007@gmail.com



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Blodgett
Docket # FD 35952
395 E. Street & W
Washington, D.C.

Jefferson Transportation Board

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