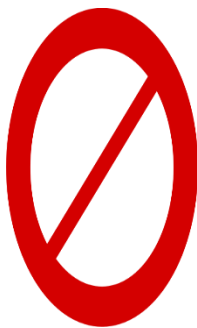


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**BLOCK
GLBT**

June 1, 2017

RE: GLBT Application – Docket #35952

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

We, Ralph & Marla Heldt, 9914 N. Prairie Trail, Grant Park, Illinois 60940, oppose this proposed project. We have lived in the exact location of Kankakee County where this project is proposed to be located. We have many family members here, our church, Zion Lutheran Church of Grant Park, Illinois is also located in the proposed site. Generations and generations of family members have been laid to rest in the cemetery located behind the church. Another cemetery lies south of the Will-Kankakee County Line Road, known as the Heusing Cemetery which effects many other families. We also both grew up on a farm in this area and understand the importance of farm land and it's production to feed America.

Additional reasons we oppose this project, is that there is not a report or long term plan from any regional planning board that says this railroad is needed. The 2012 Illinois State Rail Plan fails to foresee a possible need for a bypass around Chicago. The Chicago Region Environment and Transportation Efficiency Program (CREATE) also does not see a need for a bypass of the Chicago market. To put it simply, this proposed project has not been on any planning group's radar.

GLBT has also failed to provide basic economic data to prove the proposed railroads viability. GLBT has not provided proof that any of the 6 Class 1 railroads will use this bypass with a letter of intent. GLBT has failed to show proof that this project will be more economical than the existing interchange rails in Chicagoland.

It is foreseeable in times of high rail demand, like what we have seen in 2014, the rail lines would use an alternate around Chicagoland. However, it is equally foreseeable in times of normal rail demand or during a rail depression, like we are in know, a GLBT bypass would be useless and sit idle. We do not

need an 8 billion dollar rail line that is only used as an overflow pressure relief valve and sits idle 95% of the time.

GLBT has also failed to show it will do no harm to the existing interchange railroads. If GLBT is about to offer track usage at a competitive rate, the harm done to the existing interchange railroads can be create an imbalance in the Chicagoland market. The Chicago rail market works because both interchange railroads are profitable and solvent. If the GLBT harms one or the other interchange rails, it can throw the entire Continental United States rail market into turmoil. At best, the creation of GLBT would be a transfer of wealth from one railroad to another in a captive market.

GLBT has also failed to show the incentive the 6 Class 1 railroads will have to use a Chicagoland bypass. With the 6 railroads as investors in the 2 Chicagoland interchange railroads, the 6 CEO's will realize diverting trains from the interchanges to GLBT will create a loss and hardship on their investments in the interchange railroads. Put simply, there is no incentive for the 6 to use GLBT.

GLBT Application fails to acknowledge changes in the rail transportation market but only assumes the recent high demand market will continue to develop. We are now in a rail recession. The demand of unit trains has subsided. The demand for coal in eastern states is gone. The demand for oil by rail is reduced with new pipelines coming online. The intermodal rail market is evolving with the advancements of the Panama Canal and container ships are being sent to east coast ports rather than being railed across America from the west coast. Put simply, the previous high demands on railroads was a result of a perfect storm of several industries converging on rail but have since moved to other forms of transportation.

Great Lakes Basin Transportation LLC refuses to make public the investor's names of this project. We, as a society, have no way of properly vetting the financial capabilities of this project's construction or have the capital to operate a railroad. We have seen firsthand the problems of a cash poor railroad with the Rock Island. This project clearly demonstrates investor's personal gain and personal gain only.

We, as a society, need to support infrastructure development when it is needed. **This proposed project is not needed**, but is also being proposed by people with no experience in the rail industry.

It is our deepest and sincere hope the Surface Transportation Board denies this project as soon as possible so we can move forward as a nation. Many farmers and landowners are delaying financial decisions because of this proposed project. Just the knowledge of a potential railroad through a farm decreases a farm's value. Home values have already decreased too in our area.

THIS IS OUR HOME AND HAS BEEN OUR HOME! MANY PEOPLE AND MANY HOURS OF HARD WORK AND LABOR HOLD THIS LAND AS OURS AND SHOULD NOT BE MADE INTO A RAILYARD! PLEASE DO NOT ALLOW THEM TO TAKE IT AWAY FROM US!!!!

Sincerely,

Ralph & Marla Heldt

9914 N. Prairie Trail

Grant Park, IL 60940

