



COUNTY OF DUTCHESS

Marcus J. Molinaro
County Executive

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Office of Proceedings
July 23, 2021
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July 19, 2021

Ms. Cynthia Brown
Secretary, Office of Proceedings
Surface Transportation Board
395 E Street, SW
Washington, DC 20423-0001

RE: Metro-North Commuter Railroad Company—Application for Adverse Discontinuance of Trackage Rights—Housatonic Railroad Company- STB Docket No. AB 1311.

Dear Ms. Cynthia Brown,

I fully support Metro-North Commuter Railroad Company's application for Adverse Discontinuance of Trackage Rights. The "Beacon Line" is an inactive railroad line which runs between the City of Beacon and Hopewell Junction.

The Beacon Line has seen no rail traffic- passenger or freight- in many years, and the proposed discontinuance of Housatonic Railroad Company's Trackage Rights would allow this underutilized transportation corridor to be redeveloped and repurposed into a non-motorized multi-use path or "rail trail." The Beacon Line has no foreseeable use for freight rail, and the abandonment of this trackage will have only a positive impact on our community.

The discontinuance and subsequent railbanking process will allow the County of Dutchess in cooperation with the City of Beacon and Metro-North to develop the Beacon Line into a rail trail connecting our community to the Empire State Trail until such time that the rail is needed at some point in the future. This trail connection will provide local economic benefits and improve the quality of life for our residents.

Thank you for your consideration to help support Metro-North Commuter Railroad Company's application for Adverse Discontinuance of Trackage Rights. Please do not hesitate to contact me with further questions.

Sincerely,

Marcus J. Molinaro
Dutchess County Executive

CC: Parties of Record