

GREEN EAGLE RAILROAD PROJECT
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT
PUBLIC COMMENT MEETING
DOCKET NO. FD 36652

EAGLE PASS INTERNATIONAL CENTER FOR TRADE
3295 Bob Rogers Drive
Eagle Pass, Texas 78852

APRIL 29TH, 2025
6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

A P P E A R A N C E S

SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BOARD REPRESENTATIVES:

Ms. Andrea Poole

Ms. Rachel McNamara

Mr. Laurent Cartayrade

ALSO PRESENT AND PARTICIPATING:

Mr. Mario Valdez

Mr. Rosalinda Medrano

Mr. Dylan Turner

Ms. Norma Mery

Ms. Lisa Castillo

Mr. Thomas Carey

Ms. Maria Torres

Ms. Mary Ann Glammeyer

Mr. Jose Lina

Ms. Sophia Torres

Mr. Gerardo Morales

Mr. Juan Antonio Tovar

Ms. Enriqueta Diaz

Mr. Alfredo Sanchez

Mr. Jesus Fuentes

Ms. Amerika Grawal

Mr. Mario Villarreal

Ms. Laura Sanchez

Mr. Jose Alonzo Corpus

Mr. Ivan Ochoa

Ms. Alicia Gonzalez

Mr. Enrique Lopetegui, Interpreter

Ms. Teresa Faz, Interpreter

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1 On the 29th day of April 2025, between the hours of
2 6:00 p.m. and 8:00 p.m., the above entitled meeting came
3 on for discussion, and the following proceedings were
4 held:

5 MS. POOLE: Good evening, everybody. As
6 people continue to come in and sit down, I'd like to
7 introduce myself. My name is Andrea Poole. I'm an
8 Environmental Protection Specialist with the Surface
9 Transportation Board's Office of Environmental Analysis.
10 Tonight, we are here to collect comments on the Draft
11 Environmental Impact Statement related to the Green
12 Eagle Railroad Project.

13 All right. Thank you guys for coming this
14 evening. I'm seeing some familiar faces from the last
15 time we were here in April and also this morning. Thank
16 you so much for taking time out of your busy schedule to
17 come and share your comments with us today about this
18 project.

19 Like I mentioned before, my name is Andrea
20 Poole. I'm with the Surface Transportation Board Office
21 of Environmental Analysis, and the Surface
22 Transportation Board has limited jurisdiction over
23 certain Surface Transportation matters. In this case,
24 the Surface Transportation Board approves the
25 construction and operation of new rail lines in the

1 United States, and so Green Eagle Railroad, LLC came to
2 the Board of Surface Transportation in December of '23
3 asking for authorization of a 1.3-mile pipeline
4 associated with an International Bridge Project, and
5 that's when the federal government got involved and we
6 developed the process of starting this Environmental
7 Impact Review.

8 So we're here today to collect your
9 comments on the Draft EIS, on our analysis. But
10 first -- but first, I want to kind of take you through
11 what we've -- what we've done today. So last year, we
12 came out in April to scope the Environmental Impact
13 Review. Part of that scoping, we look at the topics and
14 the issues that should be addressed in the document, and
15 we came out here and we got your thoughts and your
16 concerns from you in a couple of meetings here in this
17 facility as well as online.

18 We also reached out extensively to several
19 federal, state, and local agencies to get their comments
20 and get their issues on the project. We asked several
21 federal agencies if they would be interested in being
22 cooperating agencies, and the U.S. Coast Guard said yes,
23 that they have an interest in this project specifically
24 for their permitting actions, and they have become a
25 cooperating agency and they helped us to develop this

1 Draft EIS.

2 At the end of that scoping period, we
3 published in July a final Scope of Study. And since
4 last July, when that final Scope of Study was published,
5 there have been changes, certainly, to the project; the
6 project has become better defined, there are -- we've
7 had more engineering plans done that are included in the
8 EIS, and additionally, we've had several executive
9 orders and permanent regulatory changes since that
10 scoping period. This Draft EIS reflects all of those
11 changes that have happened since scoping last year.

12 So in April, we did scoping in July, we
13 released a final Scope of Study. And then in March, in
14 the middle of March last month, we released the Draft
15 EIS. It has been out for review for about 30, 35 days.
16 The comment period is open until the 5th of May, giving
17 us about a total of 45 days to comment on the study that
18 we've created based on your comments and interests and
19 issues from regulatory agencies.

20 So here we are today. When I came and told
21 you about what our process would look like for this
22 Draft EIS, we showed you the same -- the same slide, but
23 we were up at the very -- at the second line of that
24 with Scoping. And now we're here at the Draft EIS stage
25 and we're here to get your comments on how we did with

1 the analysis, whether we missed anything, and if the
2 mitigations we found from the impacts meet your needs or
3 if you have better ones, and we hope to hear from you on
4 some of those issues tonight.

5 So what is in the Draft EIS? There were a
6 lot of comments from a group about accidents and spills.
7 We've covered that in two sections for you, under Grade
8 Crossing Safety and Delay, which has to do with
9 railroad, and then again under Roadway Capacity and
10 Safety, which has to do with road safety and the road
11 transportation.

12 So in the EIS, you'll find that Chapter 1
13 outlines the purpose and need, what were the problems
14 that the applicant is proposing to fix with the project.
15 Chapter 2 talks about alternatives and the methodology
16 that we developed to evaluate the benefits of various
17 alternatives for the project. There was originally
18 several routes; we narrowed it down to two, and along
19 with the No-Action Alternative, we provided a Northern
20 Rail Line and a Southern Rail Line Alternative.

21 Chapter 3 is the analysis of all of these
22 resource areas, and Chapter 4 includes mitigations that
23 we've come up with so far. So here is a map of the
24 proposed project. You can see, in yellow, the Northern
25 Rail Alternative; in orange, the Southern Rail

1 Alternative. They come together near Del Rio Road, I
2 think. Let me check. Yeah. And then they combine up
3 to the UP line south of Clarks Yard.

4 In addition, you'll see a tower, and then
5 above that in white and gray, you see a road bridge for
6 commercial trucks. So there will be, finally, you know,
7 the potential for being constructed one road bridge, one
8 rail bridge, and then a combined CBP inspection facility
9 that would use both -- that would share resources.

10 The main alternatives that we look at and
11 compare in the Draft EIS are the Northern Rail
12 Alternative and the Southern Rail Alternative. The
13 applicant proposed the Southern Rail Alternative you can
14 see on the left-hand side, and what I think is -- is
15 important is you can see that it curves around Seco
16 Creek so that it only crosses Seco Creek once right near
17 where it attaches to the UP line. This alternative is
18 very close to residential housing that exists, so that
19 was a concern for my team, so we developed the Northern
20 Rail Alternative.

21 The Northern Rail Alternative, you can see,
22 crosses Seco Creek three additional times. It is a
23 little further away from the -- from the housing areas.
24 And then the EIS talks about the comparison of the
25 visual impacts, the noise, and the water quality related

1 to each of those alternatives.

2 But otherwise, the alternatives have very
3 similar features. They both include service roads,
4 fencing, nonintrusive inspection facilities for rail
5 cars, which means the rail will come across the Rio
6 Grande Bridge and it won't have to stop for crews to
7 change in the middle of the bridge. It will keep moving
8 all the way to Clarks Park so you don't have any crammed
9 traffic crossings. You don't have horns blaring for the
10 railroad as it comes across at grade crossings because
11 these new routes don't include any at grade crossings,
12 so all the horns would be eliminated.

13 There are some adverse impacts that we
14 outline in the EIS, the visual quality being one of them
15 for your consideration to look at today and provide us
16 with comments on, if you choose to do so, because they
17 do come off close to houses.

18 Okay. So with that, I'd like to open the
19 floor to hearing comments. I'll turn the meeting over
20 to my very capable facilitator. And if you could -- if
21 you could keep your comments directed to me and my team
22 on our document so that we don't have any hard feelings
23 after we leave between you; 'cause your community is
24 together and your community is strong and I want to keep
25 it that way. Thank you for your time.

1 MS. McNAMARA: Good evening. I'm Rachel
2 McNamara, and I want to help facilitate your
3 conversation with us this evening. This is your
4 opportunity to provide feedback on the Draft Environment
5 Impact Statement. And we're here to listen, so we won't
6 be having a Q-and-A and we won't be taking questions.
7 We want to maximize your time to provide comments. To
8 ensure that everyone is heard, we're gonna have a
9 three-minute time limit for each commenter. I will try
10 to warn you at about 30 seconds, and at the 3-minute
11 mark, you'll have a timer, I'm gonna ask that you close
12 your comments.

13 I'm going to be working through the list of
14 pre-registered speakers, prioritizing those speakers
15 first who have not spoken today. There are a handful of
16 people who've spoken this morning. We will call you, we
17 just want to get through the folks that haven't spoken
18 yet first. And then after we've gone through all the
19 commenters, assuming there's time, we'll open up the
20 floor and take additional comments.

21 The meeting's being transcribed and
22 recorded. We have a court reporter here. We also have
23 simultaneous translation. So that we can accurately
24 capture your comments, we ask that you use the
25 microphone, please, and address your comments to the

1 front of the room. That'll help us to make sure we keep
2 an accurate record. Before you speak, please state your
3 name and spell it, that way we can make sure we
4 attribute your comments correctly. We just ask that you
5 refrain from profanity and other disruptive behavior, to
6 treat all members of the meeting here, all participants
7 in the meeting, with civility.

8 So just as a -- as a reminder, we'd like to
9 keep comments to three minutes. I'll be calling people
10 and trying to let you know the order in which we'll be
11 bringing the speakers up. Thank you. So beginning with
12 Mr. Valdez, Mario Valdez, Dylan Turner, and then Lisa
13 Castillo.

14 MR. VALDEZ: My name is Mario Valdez. What
15 we didn't really understand is the project. Let's start
16 with the railways. (Technical difficulty.) We know we
17 need spaces for inspections and offices and everything a
18 little bit more to the south. (Technical difficulty.)
19 A friend of mine, he says that any permanent
20 authorization of paperwork with the Mexican government
21 accepts doing it on the southern part should be
22 responsible to do it as soon as possible. In a few
23 words, that's what we're saying. Financially,
24 economically, and time-wise, we would be better off with
25 motor vehicles and the bridge on the southern part on

1 the rail. Thank you.

2 MS. McNAMARA: Dylan Turner, Lisa Castillo,
3 and then Sophia Torres.

4 MS. POOLE: And could I have everybody turn
5 their cell phones off, please?

6 MR. TURNER: Hi there. My name is Dylan
7 Turner. The City of Eagle Pass needs some good growth.
8 It lacks the decent-paying jobs and has a lot of work to
9 do before Eagle Pass becomes a successful town. It
10 bears no economic value to college students seeking
11 jobs. The residents will say it's not a poor community,
12 but let's be honest, we are, and the only way to change
13 that is to provide the change that Eagle Pass needs; for
14 example, better-paying jobs where residents can afford
15 the housing costs that this town has to offer.

16 The Green Eagle Railroad Project has the
17 potential to change Maverick County's economic
18 landscape. I'm a nature enthusiast and believe that Elm
19 Creek Park is a park that needs to be protected and made
20 into a protected area. If the Green Eagle Railroad
21 Project provides protection plus the economic benefits,
22 then I believe it could be good for our community.
23 Thank you for allowing me to speak today.

24 MS. McNAMARA: Lisa Castillo and then
25 Sophia Torres and then Antonieta (inaudible).

1 MS. CASTILLO: Hello. My name is Lisa
2 Castillo. I bring unto you the case about the air
3 rights. Okay. What about the air rights? Is it gonna
4 affect the neighborhood of the people? Because when you
5 buy into real estate, you buy air rights, you buy the
6 rights to the ground. What's gonna happen when they
7 make the -- the rail road? You know what it takes to
8 make a railroad? They dispose of all the chemicals and
9 everything. Have you thought of that? Okay. You're
10 gonna leave. Are you gonna be here to be inspecting
11 everything that the railroad crew does? No, you're
12 gonna be in your own home. Would you like that to
13 happen in your community? No.

14 Okay. Have you thought about the
15 pollution? You say yes, but in reality, you know what a
16 railroad does. And he says Puerto Verde. What does it
17 mean; Verde as in the environment; or Verde, green, as
18 in the money coming in for him. What he's trying to do
19 is he's trying to build a community for himself. He's
20 gonna have his own police. He's gonna have his own fire
21 department. He's gonna be like sole owner.

22 So he's gonna use eminent domain. What is
23 eminent domain? Eminent domain is the capacity of
24 getting people out of their houses and (inaudible). So
25 we don't want that here in Eagle Pass. We don't need

1 that here in Eagle Pass because Eagle Pass, for us, is
2 our home, our community. We've grown here, we live
3 here, and we don't need any private entity here. Thank
4 you very much.

5 MS. McNAMARA: Ms. Torres.

6 MS. SOPHIA TORRES: With your permission,
7 I'm conceding my three minutes to my daughter because
8 I'm feeling a little woozy.

9 MS. MARIA TORRES: I am the Chair of the
10 Pacuache Indian Nation. We have been injured. We
11 continue to be injured with this Puerto Verde. How dare
12 you? The transportation surface mining has given us
13 finally (inaudible). We are a nation. And I don't
14 know, but again, where is all the mapping? Well, we're
15 gonna ask for all those surveys that you're gonna
16 redact. What are you hiding, federal government?

17 We already have a relationship
18 nation-to-nation. That is the Pacuache Indian First
19 Nation. Here is the map of 1720. It is highly
20 regarded, this document of Francisco Barrera, over 5,000
21 leguas attesting that there's a nation called the
22 Pacuache here in Maverick County. Grandma always told
23 us, Guadalupe (inaudible), we're Pacuache. We're
24 Pacuache. We're Indians. We never left this land.

25 The United States (inaudible), originally

1 from Bavaria, Washington, D.C., came in 1890 in
2 reference to the partition of the land and protection of
3 the land. My great-grandmother Guadalupe buried here at
4 the Refugio Cemetery with great-grandpa Vicente. We are
5 from here. We're mission Indians.

6 We're pre-historic people. We preexisted,
7 we predated before anybody was here. We pre-exist five
8 different nations, okay? From Spain to the Vatican,
9 they came and oppressed us, and we came in agreement
10 because the wars that we had with the Comanches and the
11 Apaches. They were predators to us. There was two
12 nations, (inaudible). We're described in the United
13 Nations.

14 I am the authority. I am the
15 contributor-writer with the Department of Interior by
16 orders of Ken Salazar, our former ambassador to Mexico,
17 and I talked to him personally, encouraged for the
18 recognition. We're still waiting to be recognized and
19 give us over a million acres, and we would not ever take
20 anything from anybody.

21 And for some of these youth that they're
22 (inaudible) master's degree, saying this is a poor
23 community, look at Piedras Negras and the maquiladoras,
24 the progress in the last 40 years polluting the waters,
25 all the drainage, all the black water in our sacred Rio

1 Grande or Rio Bravo that gives us, through hundreds of
2 years, the community, lives because our people were
3 here.

4 MS. McNAMARA: Please begin wrapping up,
5 ma'am.

6 MS. MARIA TORRES: And again, here it is
7 (inaudible) 1760 written to our nation here in Eagle
8 Pass all the way to the Rio -- to San Antonio, the
9 Pajalaches.

10 MS. McNAMARA: You're at three minutes.

11 MS. MARIA TORRES: (Inaudible). Okay? The
12 Pacuache.

13 MS. POOLE: Thank you, Ms. Torres.

14 MS. MARIA TORRES: Here existed great
15 nations before the Spanish came and the whites after the
16 Battle of the Alamo. And our nations --

17 MS. McNAMARA: Ms. Torres, we're going to
18 need you to stop.

19 MS. MARIA TORRES: Okay. And here's the
20 slides you (inaudible) last June and July. These are
21 significant.

22 MS. McNAMARA: Ms. Torres, we need to move
23 on to the other speakers.

24 MS. MARIA TORRES: And we still have the
25 three minutes added to my mom and mine. We never had an

1 opportunity.

2 MS. McNAMARA: We had already called --

3 MS. MARIA TORRES: We're concerned because
4 these slides are significant to our story. They're
5 inhabiting -- because this is an extinction of our
6 pueblo. Okay.

7 MS. McNAMARA: I understand. We need time
8 to move on to the next person.

9 MS. MARIA TORRES: We need to discuss more
10 because we don't hear from you. Where's Allen? He's in
11 charge. And again, where is he, you know? Thank you.
12 We still are getting injured. We continue to be
13 injured. Deny this permit. Do not move with this
14 permit, okay?

15 MS. McNAMARA: Ms. Torres, we need to move
16 on. Thank you. Sandra Sanchez Rios. Emilia de los
17 Santos. Jose Lina.

18 MR. LINA: Somebody already said it was
19 stolen. They already said it.

20 MS. POOLE: No, sir, your comments are just
21 as important. Thank you for coming up.

22 MR. LINA: Well, I still oppose the
23 project. I'm not -- I don't live in Seco Mines, but I
24 do support them.

25 MR. McNAMARA: I'm sorry, could you state

1 your name? I'm sorry.

2 MR. LINA: My name's Jose Lina. I'm a
3 border organization leader here. I came here to speak
4 against it. What I had to say, somebody already said
5 it.

6 MR. POOLE: That's okay.

7 MR. LINA: I want to say it again. But
8 like I said, one of the main things was the way it's
9 gonna affect me. I know that Eagle Pass is gonna lose
10 some revenue from that bridge and it's gonna try to make
11 it up one way or the other with taxes, raising one of
12 the utilities. They got several options. And also,
13 I -- I also oppose it because I feel when I talk to some
14 of the political filers here, they didn't have the right
15 answers or they didn't have no answers at all, so that
16 tells me they're not well-informed or they didn't even
17 bother to be informed themselves.

18 So I don't know what kind of agreement that
19 came, but if they would have researched it, they would
20 have found out that it's a flood zone, most of that
21 area, when it rains. I don't know if you've been here
22 when it's been raining a lot. Everything gets flooded.
23 I've lived here all my life, and I think like three or
24 four times, that Rio Grande swelled up and it took
25 everything in its path, and I don't see no plans here

1 that says how you're going to avoid that, keeping it
2 from flooding.

3 There's other areas, better areas, but
4 obviously, you're not looking for the best area, you're
5 all looking for the cheapest. And in this case, I'm
6 talking about who's paying for it, and I know who it is.
7 So that's one of the main reasons besides the ones that
8 I had before that somebody else already said it. So I
9 don't know. I don't want it here. Thank you.

10 MS. McNAMARA: Thank you. Jerry Morales.

11 MR. MORALES: Hello. Good evening. Good
12 afternoon. My name is Gerardo "Jerry" Morales, and I
13 proudly serve as County Commissioner for Precinct 1 here
14 in Maverick County. I appreciate the opportunity to
15 speak today regarding the Green Eagle Railroad Draft
16 Environmental Impact Statement.

17 First, I want to thank you, Office of
18 Environmental Analysis and Surface Transportation Board,
19 for conducting a thorough review and inviting public
20 input on the project that would have lasting impacts on
21 our community and environment. When I took my oath of
22 office, I made a promise to serve with integrity,
23 protect the safety and the rights of our residents, and
24 always put the people of Maverick County first. That's
25 not just a responsibility I take seriously, it's a value

1 I live by every day.

2 Let me be very clear: I am not against
3 progress or trade or opportunity, but I am against any
4 project that threatens the quality of life, security, or
5 most importantly, the voice of our community. After
6 reviewing the Draft Environmental Impact Statement, I am
7 deeply concerned with the Southern Rail Alternative.
8 Currently, I have (inaudible) as a preliminary preferred
9 alternative. Why was a third or fourth option never
10 brought into play?

11 A visibility study that was conducted by
12 Maverick County in December of 2018 identified a route
13 approximately eight to nine miles outside of town at the
14 intersection of Highway 277 and the proposed completion
15 of TxDOT Loop 480. The location was evaluated
16 specifically because it could support trade growth
17 without placing existing neighborhoods and national
18 resources at risk. I believe that if the Board was
19 presented with this option, the results would be very
20 different, because it's just common sense to place this
21 project on the outskirts of town and not in the middle
22 of highly-congested neighborhoods.

23 This project, as currently proposed, cuts
24 through long-established colonias, where how many
25 families have built their lives through years of

1 sacrifice and hard work. One must also ask: How was
2 the final route selected? When and how did it change
3 from what the 2018 visibility study showed? Were local
4 families ever truly included in this process?

5 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKERS: No.

6 MS. McNAMARA: 30 seconds.

7 MR. MORALES: Major infrastructure projects
8 like this should never be decided behind closed doors.
9 Transparency, community engagement, and honest
10 leadership are not optional, they are essential. The
11 people of Maverick County deserve answers, and more
12 importantly, they deserve respect.

13 I strongly urge the Board to make a
14 more-responsible approach; one that reflects both
15 economic opportunity, environmental accountability, and
16 most importantly, community involvement. As
17 commissioner, I will continue to stand with the
18 residents and insist that growth be guided by
19 transparency, thoughtful planning, and the preservation
20 of our community. Maverick County is not for sale to a
21 selected few. Thank you for your time.

22 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: We need
23 commissioners like him, with a heart for the public, for
24 the community. People, stand up. Let's do it.

25 MS. McNAMARA: I'm going to move on with

1 our other speakers. Juan Antonio Tovar.

2 MR. TOVAR: Evening, folks. Is this thing
3 on? All right. Evening, folks. Welcome to Maverick
4 County, Eagle Pass. All right. You know, a lot of
5 people have gone through a bunch of stuff about
6 environment and all that. Okay. Let's talk about the
7 future and what the real cost is gonna be.

8 There is a bill out there that will give a
9 private entity, a private entity, Puerto Verde, power of
10 eminent domain if we don't agree -- if we can't fight
11 that Puerto Verde. Nobody elected them. Eminent
12 domain. They will also have the power to tax, to tax
13 us. It's a private entity. They're supposed to come up
14 with all the money.

15 You are putting the future -- I was -- I
16 was a schoolteacher for 42 years. All of those kids and
17 their grandkids are going to be in debt for the rest of
18 their life because of a private entity and a few public
19 officials that are really gung-ho on this. Is this
20 really progress? Now, I've heard them say that we're
21 supposed to make all of this money. All right. I
22 learned this in college, all right, when I went to Texas
23 A&I, 'cause I'm not gonna say the other name. Anyway.
24 All right.

25 My professors, a lot of them said: All

1 right, when somebody tells you something, you need to
2 understand who is talking to you, who wrote it, where
3 did they get the information, and at the end, who paid
4 for that statement. Because we're supposed to be making
5 millions and millions of dollars. From where? All
6 right.

7 And I remind all the people: Back in the
8 60s and 70s, cigarette companies, they told us that
9 smoking cigarettes was safe. Basically, we all believed
10 it until we found out that the tobacco companies were
11 the ones paying for these studies. All right. That's
12 how I see all of these -- this stuff about all of this
13 money we're going to be making. Who wrote it? Who paid
14 for that statement? All right.

15 MS. McNAMARA: 30 seconds.

16 MR. TOVAR: I still have some more time.
17 All right. Now, you're doing them a disservice. Think
18 about it, okay? It's not just about a private entity.
19 There are real people here. There are real people, all
20 right? If you do that, you're taking all the power away
21 from the real people and giving it to Puerto Verde.
22 Thank you.

23 MS. McNAMARA: Thank you. Enriqueta Diaz
24 and then Alfredo Sanchez and Jesus Fuentes.

25 MS. DIAZ: Thank you. My name is Enriqueta

1 Diaz, and I just want to bring out some facts that you
2 may or nay not have noticed. This morning, when I was
3 here during the first session, I noticed the map you-all
4 brought out where the railroad is. I did not see
5 anywhere, because it was blurry to begin with, that
6 there's a hazmat pit being placed for hazardous material
7 to be deposited right close to residential areas.

8 A few years ago, we fought a
9 hazardous-material deposit that was gonna be brought
10 from New York and we won. We stopped it. And we are
11 gonna join forces with all the strength we have to stop
12 this ridiculous attack on our community. One of the
13 problems that I see here -- I'm very close -- I am in a
14 regional tribe of 16. I am the last of 16 children.
15 I'm Cherokee from Oklahoma, from my parents. I've lived
16 in Seco Mines, where I was born, all my life. I'm 82
17 years old right now.

18 What this project is doing without any
19 consideration, Mr. Garibay and all his cronies, is that
20 you're gonna displace people from their homes near the
21 areas in Seco Mines, (inaudible), Hopedale, and probably
22 all of Quemado, all to please a politician that is not
23 even local nor does he care about the feelings and the
24 importance of our community, that we live here.

25 I attended a meeting, ladies and gentlemen.

1 I attended a meeting in Austin, Mr. Fuentes was also
2 here, when Mr. Eddie Morales, our so-called legislator
3 representing our needs, he was proposing House Bill 74,
4 and the House Bill had never been presented to anyone to
5 know anything of what it contained. Again, no
6 transparency.

7 Mister -- Mr. Morales indicated when I
8 brought out the fact that they had no transparency,
9 nobody knew -- because I'm one of the very few that are
10 on top of everything we're doing with Puerto Verde. I
11 found out that the bill was going to be presented, so
12 I --

13 MS. McNAMARA: Ms. Diaz --

14 MS. DIAZ: I'm getting ready to close. I
15 know I have limited time. The thing is -- the answer
16 when I said that we had not known anything, nobody, no
17 hearing, nothing, his answer was -- Mr. Morales's answer
18 was: We don't have time to get the people involved.
19 We've got to get it approved now. We don't need any
20 meeting. We need -- this is a once-in-a-lifetime
21 project and we need to get it approved with or without
22 the people.

23 Now, these have been the same words that
24 our County Commissioner and the cronies that are there,
25 the Commissioner's Court, have told the community: You

1 are not -- you are not able to get any of our record
2 because we're not going to answer public information.
3 We don't know anything on this. We're on top of things.

4 This project is being funded by a bunch of
5 investors, and that bill represents five names of five
6 board members that Mr. Garibay already has. One of
7 them --

8 MS. McNAMARA: Ma'am, I'm gonna need you
9 to --

10 MS. DIAZ: And as far as I know, the first
11 one is from the United Kingdom. The other one is a
12 lobbyist being paid to lobby for support. You guys
13 need --

14 MS. McNAMARA: We need to move on to the
15 next commenter.

16 MS. DIAZ: I'm sorry, but you guys need to
17 pay attention to the people. Or are you just here to
18 rubber-stamp whatever Mr. Garibay declares because he
19 has the money and we don't? We're saying no, that we
20 don't want the bridge. We don't want Mr. Garibay and we
21 don't want his money either. He can head back to where
22 he came from. Thank you very much.

23 MS. McNAMARA: Alfredo Sanchez.

24 MR. SANCHEZ: All right. Well, I'm here
25 today to address some concerns. I was here earlier

1 today and I heard a lot of good points. My address
2 concerns with the company here; the way they did their
3 dealings, their backroom dealings, the backdoor deals,
4 they courted with our politicians. Our politicians sold
5 us out. They left us here. They did their deals behind
6 our backs without consulting us as constituents.

7 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Yes. Where are
8 they?

9 MR. SANCHEZ: Where are they? They had --
10 they did not have the face to show up today. They
11 brought us here to show Fuentes to ask them that they
12 will not answer. So I'm not here to ask them answers.
13 I'm here to tell you-all what we need to do.

14 They come back here promising jobs and
15 whatnot. The little respect they show by doing all
16 these deals behind our backs, they're not gonna hire us.
17 They've got their own people coming from outside of
18 town. They're gonna get the significant jobs. They're
19 gonna leave us behind to clean their yards and clean
20 their rooms and whatnot. That's what they want. All
21 their prominent jobs are going to somewhere else. The
22 little respect this company shows for us is what it is.

23 Now, the other disrespect they show is if
24 you go online -- I've been following this for awhile.
25 If you go online and you look at their maps, half of the

1 stuff they've got on there is not the same maps they
2 have here in the booklets. Those hazmat grid books, the
3 radiation -- the radiation box thing they got there,
4 none of that is on there. They start by lying, they're
5 gonna finish by lying. These people are gonna build
6 their stuff, they're gonna leave, and they're gonna
7 leave us with a railroad right through the middle of
8 town congesting all the traffic. They say it's gonna
9 alleviate traffic. It ain't gonna alleviate traffic.

10 You can bring up the concerns as well --
11 somebody brought up earlier in the meeting about you-all
12 have been complaining down by Loop 480 where the Customs
13 building is, the National Guard, all that dust. This is
14 three to four times bigger. All of Seco Mines will be a
15 big dirt pile. And that's just the Seco Mines area.
16 We've still got all of Loop 480 and Loop 77. These
17 people have no respect for us.

18 So I ask you-all that: Why all of the
19 backroom dealings? Why all of that? I don't expect an
20 answer from you.

21 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Are you with them?

22 MS. POOLE: No, ma'am, I work for you. I
23 work for the -- the Surface Transportation Board.

24 MR. SANCHEZ: Leaving that aside --

25 MS. POOLE: I don't have any interest in

1 this project.

2 MR. SANCHEZ: -- your politicians did this.
3 Your local commissioners did this.

4 MS. McNAMARA: 30 seconds.

5 MR. SANCHEZ: They're gonna be gone, or the
6 Puerto Verde will be gone, and you have to make your
7 commissioners answer to this. They're the ones that are
8 gonna be behind. You guys remember who did this to us.
9 'Cause these people are gonna kick us out of our homes.
10 They're gonna pay you -- undercut you, low tax, low
11 dollar, and with the housing market right now, you're
12 never gonna be able to afford a home at what they're
13 gonna give you. Just remember that: Hold out. Don't
14 take those first offers. Don't give into any offers.
15 That's the best we can do, hold out.

16 MS. McNAMARA: Thank you. Jesus Fuentes
17 and then Amerika Grawal and Mario Villarreal.

18 MR. FUENTES: My name -- my name is
19 Jesse F. Fuentes. I'm here on behalf of the Eagle Pass
20 Border Coalition. In the morning, I presented my
21 concerns. I want to thank you, board members, for
22 listening.

23 Just to reiterate: I mentioned the fact
24 that you're proposing to move a million-and-a-half tons
25 of earth. The type of equipment and everything that's

1 gonna be needed for that is tremendous. The type of
2 damage that is going to occur in the area of the
3 Hopedale Road and Seco Creek is incredible. I read your
4 whole report, and I'm bothered by the fact that, as I
5 mentioned, that out of only eight agencies that were
6 supposed to provide input, only one did, and I'm
7 troubled by that.

8 But as I spoke in the morning, I told you
9 that I had two primary concerns. One was, of course,
10 environment; what's going to happen to our only
11 drinking-water source, and the way that on your report
12 there was no mention that less than half-a-mile down is
13 the intake valve for the city and the county, and we
14 have 1950s technology that will not allow the filtration
15 to work properly if any sediment or any type of leakage
16 gets in the river. So that's of deep concern.
17 Environmental issues.

18 I tell you what, the next issue that I had
19 was economics. In reading the EIS, I saw that, multiple
20 times, you mentioned that if this project gets approved,
21 UP, Union Pacific, and Burlington Northern and Santa Fe
22 Rails will discontinue service beyond the point of the
23 new spot. Why is that important? Because 60 to
24 75 percent of the revenue generated for Eagle Pass will
25 be gone, and that's going to affect all of us.

1 So I would say to you that you're killing
2 the community of Eagle Pass if you vote yes on this. So
3 I ask you politely to go through the No-Action
4 Alternative and give the citizens, the residents of
5 Maverick County, the appropriate time. If the community
6 wants this, we're pushing for a petition for a
7 referendum to see if we really want it. Give the
8 citizens of this community an opportunity to have a
9 choice. Our politicians didn't. They went behind our
10 backs and made all these backroom deals. And even at
11 the state level, there's still deals, so I'm concerned
12 about who's involved in this. But we as the citizens --

13 MS. McNAMARA: If you could wrap up.

14 MR. FUENTES: -- need to have input.
15 That's all that I ask. Say no, please. Thank you.

16 MS. McNAMARA: Amerika Grawal and then
17 Mario Villarreal.

18 MS. GRAWAL: Good evening. My name's
19 Amerika Grawal. I stand before you as a member of the
20 Frontera Federation and as a concerned resident and
21 advocate for the health, safety, and the future of Eagle
22 Pass.

23 While the Draft Statement claims that this
24 project will bring benefits, critical flaws in its
25 analytical process demand scrutiny, which is why we're

1 here. I have some key questions for us as community
2 advocates that we would very much like to see answered.

3 First of all, the noise barriers, will they
4 cover all of the affected areas? And also, who ensures
5 compliance once you-all leave? With the traffic safety,
6 when will the traffic signals be installed and who's
7 gonna monitor the crash increases that you pulled out in
8 the statement? Emergency response is already an issue
9 for ambulances on the road.

10 But we've spoken before about the water.
11 This bridge, every single iteration of it, is above the
12 single intake point for the City of Eagle Pass that
13 supplies all of Maverick County. How will spills in the
14 Rio Grande be handled? I have not seen that. I have
15 not seen it addressed in a way that is meaningful. In
16 terms of health protections, are air-quality monitors
17 planned near truck routes? When will they be installed
18 and will -- how are you going to handle
19 environmental-quality problems that come up? Is that
20 gonna be delegated to the City? To the County? To the
21 State? What's going to happen there?

22 And also, job opportunities need to be
23 prioritizing local hires and not external hires. We've
24 seen over and over again that private contractors come
25 in and they bring private folks from other parts of the

1 state who don't even buy property here. They leave and
2 they take their tax dollars with them. Very often, they
3 do not bring their partners, they do not bring their
4 children here.

5 Public engagement has been inadequate. I
6 understand that, here, you're holding a meeting, but
7 you're relying heavily on online access. Many affected
8 residents, particularly those in Seco Mines, I'm talking
9 about U.S. 77, Barrera Street, they were not
10 meaningfully consulted. This 45-day comment period is
11 insufficient for a project of this scale. It is going
12 to change this community, this county, this part of the
13 state dramatically, and yet, everything's been
14 restricted electronically to places that don't have
15 internet access.

16 When we did this a year ago, we purchased a
17 modem and we went into the neighborhood and provided
18 internet access so that community members could
19 participate within walking distance from their home
20 because we do not have public transportation. So the
21 community engagement has been inadequate.

22 MS. McNAMARA: 30 seconds.

23 MS. GRAWAL: Noise-mitigation plans are
24 unacceptable as it disproportionately affects our
25 community. I'm asking for stronger noise mitigation on

1 all the affected areas. The Northern Alternative puts
2 us very highly at risk in a number of ways. It has more
3 impacts on the water quality and the floodplain impacts,
4 I feel, are not appropriately being addressed, given the
5 experience that we've had here.

6 Of course, the flora and the fauna are also
7 going to be impacted (inaudible) Environmental Impact
8 Statement, but you deemed hazardous-material spills are
9 unlikely, and yet, with less and less regulation across
10 the United States, we're seeing an increase in that.
11 We're seeing longer trains, and those will harm
12 low-income households that have fewer resources to
13 recover, especially if FEMA's gone.

14 Finally, the use of eminent domain to seize
15 homes and businesses is unjust. You must reject this
16 application unless you're advised a route to avoid
17 impacting our community. We deserve transparency and
18 not a rush to sacrifice our community. Thank you.

19 MS. McNAMARA: Thank you. Mario Villarreal
20 and then Laura Sanchez.

21 MR. VILLARREAL: First, thank you to the
22 directors of the Puerto Verde bridge for permission for
23 the commercial bridge. But here, the point is that we
24 don't want that to happen what happened with the second
25 International Bridge. That was not the place for that

1 bridge. Now we're paying the consequences of that. The
2 only one against it was the Licenciado Javier Riojas at
3 that time.

4 Right now, the only thing we're asking
5 citizens of both sides of the border is that the bridges
6 should be more to the north of (technical difficulty.)
7 Where they did the Internal Bridge No. 2, the state
8 government brought the land to (technical difficulty.)
9 Besides that, they're doing an industrial part that was
10 approved by the city in the intersection of 480 and El
11 Indio Highway. That industrial park is -- is located
12 outside of Eagle Pass and Piedras Negras. They're going
13 from the north to the south through Veterans Boulevard
14 57 and 480. That affects us, and it's going to affect
15 us right now, like the same way it's affecting Laredo
16 and Nuevo Laredo. The commercial route is going to pose
17 the citizens to stop on both sides and are paralyzed.
18 They're extending the Laredo loop and they're doing
19 interstate (technical difficulty.) In a couple of years
20 that you do this, that's going to happen here. They
21 will be completely paralyzed by the time that happens.
22 My point is: Move all the way to the north or all the
23 way to the south, but don't do it where you're doing it
24 now. Thank you.

25 MS. McNAMARA: Laura Sanchez.

1 MS. SANCHEZ: Hello. My name's Laura
2 Sanchez, and I am here today because I'm deeply
3 concerned about the Puerto Verde Project. I will be
4 impacted by the proximity this project is to my home.
5 I'll be honest, I haven't been able to fully review the
6 Environmental Impact Statement. At over 180 pages of
7 technical and legal language, this document is
8 overwhelming for someone who works long hours and
9 doesn't have a background in environmental law.

10 The STB says it wants public input, but how
11 can working people like me give meaningful feedback when
12 we don't have enough time or resources to understand
13 what's really at stake?

14 I'm asking for two things: One, an
15 extension on the final EIS so our community has real
16 time to review this properly. Two, a plain-language
17 summary of the key impacts, because we deserve to know
18 how this project affects our health, safety, and future
19 without needing a law degree to figure it out.

20 This isn't just about paperwork, it's about
21 fairness. If the STB truly values public input, then
22 give us a real chance to participate. Don't rush this
23 process while leaving working families in the dark.
24 Thank you for listening, and I urge you to grant our
25 community more time.

1 MS. McNAMARA: Thank you. We've reached
2 the end of my list of registered speakers. Are there
3 other speakers who'd like to have some time?
4 Absolutely. Please state your name and spelling for the
5 record.

6 MR. CORPUS: Yes. My name is Jose Alonzo
7 Corpus, and I'm here today as a concerned citizen of
8 Eagle Pass, and I'm directly impacted by the Puerto
9 Verde Project. We know there's a lot of potential
10 impacts to our community, especially to my health,
11 because I live very close to it.

12 First and foremost, the process, in fact,
13 failed us. The Surface Transportation Board and our
14 local elected officials have not made the genuine effort
15 to engage with residents or to ensure transparency. The
16 Environmental Impact Statement is 100 pages, complex
17 technical language, nearly impossible for many of us to
18 understand it. Government agencies and leaders have a
19 responsibility to explain it clearly. We are not asking
20 for special treatment, we're demanding our rights to
21 fully understand what is being proposed.

22 We have already requested public workshops
23 to address our concerns with the Maverick County
24 Commissioner's Court and we were ignored. Today, we
25 call on the STB to, one, host a second public hearing

1 for the EIS and to explain in plain accessible language.
2 Hold a town-hall meeting with independent experts who
3 can break down the risks, not just agencies
4 representing.

5 And this can be done in both English and
6 Spanish, because they gotta consider that 35 percent of
7 our community speaks limited English. Only 50 percent
8 of our community has a college degree, yet the Surface
9 Transportation Board expects us to negatively understand
10 technical documents on our own; a document that took you
11 four years to complete, and you are expecting us to
12 understand this document in about a month, because you
13 released it on March 14th of 2025. This is unacceptable
14 and unjust.

15 Second, there's some pretty good studies
16 missing. The EIS does not fully assess air-pollution
17 risks, like our people mentioned, near our homes and
18 schools. I never saw any type of air-quality monitoring
19 systems around Highway 277 and Veterans Boulevard. This
20 project (inaudible) with a new rail and over 3,000
21 trucks seem inaccurate or underplayed. We know there's
22 an economic study, by the way, but yes, you can afford a
23 study. What about health impacts?

24 MS. McNAMARA: 30 seconds.

25 MR. CORPUS: There's no clear plan to

1 prevent contamination. What I'm asking is that our
2 elected officials, if you're gonna move forward with
3 some of these demands, you're telling us that our voices
4 do not matter. These projects are not -- they're not
5 convenient or a necessity because these rail tracks are
6 already -- we have one rail track already. There's
7 another project, a community -- another bridge that is
8 being built, so we don't need another bridge. Why would
9 you want to place another rail and another bridge where
10 it's not going to benefit the community?

11 MS. POOLE: I'm gonna need you to wrap up.

12 MR. CORPUS: So our future depends on your
13 hands, and you're putting a lot of lives at risk.

14 MS. McNAMARA: Thank you. Are there any
15 other speakers who haven't had a chance to speak?

16 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: God save my Eagle
17 Pass.

18 MS. McNAMARA: Please state your name and
19 spell it for the court reporter.

20 MR. OCHOA: Good evening. My name is Ivan
21 Ochoa. Thank you for the invitation. I'm interested in
22 a particular topic you-all are bringing up, that is the
23 contamination and how it would affect you. I come here
24 to make a suggestion, or particularly a comment, that
25 the best thing would be to send it towards the south.

1 Or better yet, you-all could investigate the maps and I
2 could present another presentation next time to see
3 what's more convenient to all of us. We cannot avoid
4 progress, and in fact, we need to see how we cannot let
5 it be better for all of us. We all benefit, not just
6 myself on the Mexican side, to give follow-through for
7 all the permits that are required and make a road.
8 That's all. Thank you.

9 MS. McNAMARA: Is there anyone else who has
10 not had a chance to speak?

11 MS. GONZALEZ: I did not sign up, but
12 (inaudible).

13 MS. McNAMARA: Okay. Please just come
14 forward and state your name and spelling for the record.

15 MS. GONZALEZ: Good afternoon. My name is
16 Alicia Gonzalez, A-L-I-C-I-A G-O-N-Z-A-L-E-Z. I spoke
17 this morning and I already gave my comment, and
18 everybody else has made some comments that are the same
19 concerns.

20 Like I mentioned at the beginning, there
21 are a lot of issues that have not been addressed. You
22 come here and say that you work for us, but yet we come
23 and we don't have books to see. Actually, my friend
24 went to go copy. We went to go copy them; \$200 to copy
25 what we needed. If you were working for us, then I

1 would assume you would have something for us to see.
2 Not everybody has accessibility to internet, to
3 printers.

4 You said to comment on the visual qualities
5 on the Impact Study of the north barriers. I can't
6 picture those north barriers, and maybe other people who
7 can't either. Where are they? Why aren't they shown?
8 Do you have something to show us on the noise barriers
9 and how it looks so we could actually comment on it? Do
10 you?

11 That's -- that's what we have here. We
12 cannot have questions and answers, we can just comment.
13 And my question is, and I know you're not gonna answer
14 it: How much weights do our comments have? Because
15 you're saying you're here for us. Is this just a
16 dog-and-pony show so you can check it off your list that
17 you met with the people? Oh, I had the meeting. They
18 went. We heard. But how much is it falling on deaf
19 ears? How much of it?

20 I have a copy where Union Pacific last year
21 wrote to you in a comment about the Clarks Park and that
22 it wasn't feasible, that it was -- I'm not very savvy on
23 that, but it's here. Let me just quickly read it. And
24 yet it's here. So is there something that changed from
25 that to this? Because from what I hear, Union Pacific

1 is not in agreement with that. They're going to lose
2 money, and yet it's here in your study.

3 So I'm just here to say that we complain
4 about transparency from our local politicians, but I
5 think we're also lacking transparency from you, who are
6 supposed to be on our side and it doesn't look that way.
7 So I'm here to say no to that project. Thank you.

8 MS. McNAMARA: Thank you. Yes, sir.
9 Please come up.

10 MR. FUENTES: This comment is for the
11 people from epi. We want to deny we want to plan I want
12 for you to understand that we did I 350 away from the
13 line of the rail road. I live close to the school. The
14 chemicals they're still gonna pass through. They're go
15 through they're for the and everything else that we're
16 talking about we don't want it we already have it. And
17 the /TRAO*URTD is that everything poll here everybody
18 against everybody. It's time for /TUS people of epias
19 to stop it and about us that we think about what it's
20 concerning for. St up to machines even if they don't
21 blow horns they're bother some but we do need talk about
22 how many of us that are here we're oh pose bridge 2 many
23 of us. The economy changed epitold me they made
24 90 percent they were for Mexicans. These Mexicans need
25 to they are presenting it we want it outside of the

1 urban area outside of epi. Look in 1999 we built bridge
2 2 do you know who was really took advantage of that?
3 Pedestrian negatives remember the changed the city built
4 the bridge /RAODZ and streets in epiwe remained the
5 same. Now bridge 3 is coming on my father use to say
6 progress is trying to standing in front of the train
7 person that's ride /T-G train it can stop.

8 MS. McNAMARA: Thank you. Please state
9 your name for the record.

10 MS. MEDRANO: My name is Rosalinda Medrano,
11 and I'm against this. Why? We have two train companies
12 that are already in our community. We have a lot of
13 workers that work for those two train stations. One of
14 them is my son. He made me aware that if this situation
15 comes onboard, he will lose his job. That's not good,
16 because there's many others that will lose their jobs.

17 He works for Union Pacific. Union Pacific
18 already announced that if Puerto Verde comes in, they
19 are gone. They might leave the station with two
20 workers, but my son will lose his job. So I'm against
21 this, and I'm sure there's many others that are against
22 this project.

23 And I don't think it's safe for the
24 community, because there's a lot of health issues
25 already, so why bring in more? Thank you.

1 MS. McNAMARA: Is there anyone who hasn't
2 already spoken first? Yes, ma'am.

3 MS. MERY: Good afternoon. My name is
4 Norma Mery. I left a comment on the web page, but after
5 hearing everybody's comments, I felt moved to come up
6 and say things in person. I think our community, for
7 the most part, is totally against this.

8 And I think that the comment was made that
9 we can't stop progress, and I am in favor of progress
10 when it's done the proper way. I don't believe that
11 this is doing it in the proper way. Number one, there
12 has been no transparency. Number two is you're only
13 moving the problem. We still end up right in the middle
14 of housing developments, of new housing developments, of
15 existing developments, and you're putting in jeopardy a
16 lot of people.

17 I believe that we have to do things the
18 right way, and the right way is get more involvement
19 from the people here of Eagle Pass. I think we have to
20 be able to make our opinion heard, and I think that we
21 can accomplish what everybody wants to accomplish if we
22 move from where the proposed areas are. The areas where
23 you proposed are not acceptable to anybody, I believe
24 the majority of us here, and I believe the majority of
25 us in Eagle Pass.

1 And I heard somebody say that we should put
2 that on that ballot, and maybe that's the way to do it
3 to get more input to you people. But I don't believe
4 that this is in the best interest for us nor our
5 community.

6 MS. McNAMARA: Thank you.

7 MS. DIAZ: Because the gentleman spoke in
8 Spanish, and I guess the gentleman can translate into
9 English too, right? Okay.

10 (Technical difficulty.) There is a big
11 difference between our sides of the river. (Technical
12 difficulty.) I am one of the people -- from the people
13 that live there took their residence away and sent them
14 to live in the trash without any kind of recourse or any
15 availability. They did not allow them so say no. I am
16 one person, and they were coming for us. That is where
17 the -- we're here with the same problem. We're right
18 here putting it now because the condition is the same:
19 We did it to placate Piedras Negras.

20 We are -- we're not against progress. God
21 knows we need work. Politicians in our community, don't
22 do corrupt dealings, taking away people's homes. He's
23 over there. He's one of the ones who gave us the
24 problems. He joined with Garibay. He thinks he's a
25 representative, but he's Mr. Garibay's partner.

1 We asked him, where did he get the
2 visibility study? When a bridge is supposed to be
3 international, they have to do a visibility study. That
4 costs money and takes time. Maverick County (technical
5 difficulty) needs money for the report without costing
6 Garibay a dollar, because the work --

7 I'm very upset. And I want to apologize to
8 you, ma'am, because I was very rude to you this morning.
9 I want to apologize. I'm very angry because this is not
10 acceptable to any human being. We're in America. This
11 is what we -- we look forward to our dream and make our
12 homes, not waiting to these politicians to take all the
13 money and kick everybody out because he wants power and
14 an empire. I'm not willing to put up with it, and I
15 don't think any of these people are willing either.
16 That's why we're here. So we're pleading with you: If
17 you have any conscience, if you have any conscience,
18 whoever's gonna make a decision, look at our needs.

19 MS. McNAMARA: Okay. Thank you, ma'am.

20 MS. DIAZ: They think we have all the money
21 in the world to move. We don't. Please do justice.
22 Say no to the railroad and Puerto Verde. God bless
23 you-all.

24 MS. McNAMARA: Thank you. I appreciate
25 you-all want to speak to each other. If you can try to

1 direct your comments to us, that would be helpful.

2 MR. TOVAR: Okay. All right.

3 MS. McNAMARA: I'm sorry, can you repeat
4 your name?

5 MR. TOVAR: All right. My name is Juan
6 Antonio Tovar, Jr. I was a teacher and a coach in this
7 school district for 42 years, all right, so I have a
8 vested interest in the community, all right?

9 Now, going back to college again, I had
10 this Korean accountant, you know, professor of
11 accounting, all right? The first thing he told us was:
12 When people tell you numbers don't lie, they're lying to
13 you, okay? When people tell you numbers don't lie,
14 they're lying to you. And that's what they're doing
15 right now.

16 For those of you who -- I run into these
17 people, and they're quoting Eddie Morales, that they're
18 going to make all of these millions and millions of
19 dollars, all right, you need to ask where they are
20 getting that information, who is funding that
21 information, because numbers do lie, okay? Don't get
22 all, you know, deer-in-the-headlights with this thing.
23 It's all a big lie, all right? Let's not be part of it.
24 Let's ask questions; who made the study, who paid for
25 it, all right? Numbers lie. It just depends on who

1 gives you that information. Thank you.

2 MS. McNAMARA: Thank you.

3 MS. CASTILLO: My name is Lisa Castillo. I
4 am here again. I want to apologize for screaming at
5 you. I was agitated, okay? I'm going to speak in
6 Spanish. Okay.

7 What I'm going to say is this man,
8 Mr. Garibay, has had issues with the law. He's been
9 accused of smuggling heroin. So why is he -- you can
10 Google that, and it's there. Search United States vs.
11 Ruben Garibay and you'll find it. So this man is not a
12 good man. He has nothing good for us.

13 And I'm gonna say it in English too now.
14 Mr. Ruben Garibay has been accused. He has a case from
15 1995, United States vs. Ruben Garibay, and this case is
16 for heroin, okay? So that's one red flag that we can
17 look at.

18 And another thing is that he's been dealing
19 with Mister -- our mayor, Ramsey Cantu, which has evaded
20 taxes for a long time and he has not paid them. So
21 that's another red flag. And I don't know, but this
22 could be hearsay, that he paid Mr. Ramsey Cantu \$10,000.
23 I don't know for what. But this man has -- is used to
24 doing dealings under -- under the cover, underwater. So
25 you can look it up on Google. It says United States vs.

1 Ruben Garibay. And there's more cases like in Arizona
2 and New Mexico that are similar to cases like ours that
3 have gone up to court.

4 And I plead with you that you not let him
5 do this to our town. And also, Eagle Pass has many
6 hunters from different areas come to our town to --
7 because of the deer and the doves and everything. We
8 have lots of beautiful, you know, animals, and it would
9 be a shame for -- you know, for all of those things, all
10 of those animals to die. And we have like lots of cases
11 of cancer because of the pollution, and we wouldn't want
12 our city, you know, to become a ghost town, because
13 every generation -- you know, my parents had cancer and
14 they passed away, and so now I'm the only one, and
15 generations and generations -- and we don't want this
16 town to -- we want this town to flourish, to become, you
17 know, better, and some politicians don't want that.
18 They want to keep us down. So I plead with you: Please
19 don't let this pass. Thank you.

20 MS. McNAMARA: Thank you. We'll still
21 continue taking comments, but we'll take a five-minute
22 break. I'm sorry, sir. Go ahead.

23 MR. CAREY: My name's Thomas Carey, and I
24 was on the school board for 12 years. I've watched this
25 community since I was born in 1946. I love this

1 community. I live on the south side of town, and for me
2 to get to the north side of town, there is no direct
3 thoroughfare. I have to use the Loop 480.

4 But I've been watching this all along, and
5 I just cannot understand in my -- just my mind why we
6 would be wanting to go right down the middle of town or
7 through the main city of Eagle Pass instead of going out
8 where we're not going to be bothering people. I have
9 been appalled at our traffic that we have in the town as
10 it is. It is just terrible once the kids get out of
11 school. So I just want to let you know that I think
12 deep in my heart it needs to be somewhere outside, not
13 right down the middle. Thank you very much.

14 MS. McNAMARA: Thank you. All right.
15 We're going to take a five-minute break and then we can
16 continue with comments if there are more people that
17 want to speak.

18 (Break taken from 7:23 p.m. to 7:33 p.m.)

19 MS. POOLE: Hi, everybody. If you're still
20 here, you still may have something to say. I've seen a
21 couple of new faces. I am Andrea Poole with the Surface
22 Transportation Board. The Surface Transportation Board
23 has the authority over the construction and the
24 operation of freight rail lines in the United States.

25 We are here tonight to get comments on our

1 Draft Environmental Impact Statement related to that
2 rail as part of a bigger project called Puerto Verde
3 International Bridge Project. If you have not had a
4 chance to speak tonight, I would love to hear from you.
5 Please come on up. Tell us your name. Please spell
6 your last name.

7 The meeting is being recorded and there's a
8 transcriptionist that will ensure your comments are put
9 onto the docket so that the board and everybody else in
10 the country can see them and hear what you have to say
11 and hear your opinion on this project tonight.

12 So with that, I'd like to let you know that
13 we have about a half-hour left, and come on up if you
14 haven't been up before. Thank you so much. You may
15 have three more minutes. Nobody else has come up. Yes,
16 sir. Please state your name again for us, okay?

17 MR. CORPUS: Yes. Again, my name is Jose
18 Alonzo Corpus, and again, I'm an impacted community
19 member. I live very close to this project.

20 And I want to start by saying and just kind
21 of going back to what I said earlier: We need more
22 time, right? I think this is a very complex document,
23 right, put together by very specialized people, right?
24 It took you, again, a full year. Unfortunately, our
25 community, again, 50 percent, you know, of us -- not of

1 us, but here locally, have a degree, you know, so we
2 need to simplify this document, right?

3 We're asking -- and what I'm saying right
4 now is -- what I'm proposing is -- I'm actually
5 requesting an extension for us to find people, if the
6 Surface Transportation Board cannot come and do the
7 community outreach, you know, to explain the contents of
8 this document, then give us time to find, you know,
9 people who have some sort of expertise or maybe the
10 knowledge, the level of knowledge needed to comprehend
11 this document.

12 I browsed it. I've been reading it.
13 There's a lot of data that I don't understand. I would
14 have to be comparing data that you have placed here,
15 right? There's a lot of -- a lot of people. There's a
16 lot of acronyms. There's a whole, you know, world
17 different to me, you know? I'm pretty sure there's a
18 lot of community members out there that feel the same.
19 It is a very complex document.

20 Now, again, one of the things that, you
21 know, I was looking at is there's actually not a clear
22 plan to prevent contamination to our water resources,
23 specifically to the Rio Grande. The impacts to
24 wildlife, migratory corridors, have not been studied. I
25 still see a lot of wildlife in front of my yard, and I'm

1 going to provide you with pictures once I submit my
2 public comment.

3 There's a lot of wildlife running. There's
4 a lot of bird, deer, and other wildlife running in front
5 of my house. I live at 2684 Commissary. So I'm
6 thinking that maybe there is not currently a study, you
7 know, to study those kinds of wildlife.

8 Again, noise vibrations, they're going to
9 have an impact on the families living near to those
10 tracks, and I do believe they have been downplayed. I'm
11 thinking -- I don't know if -- you know, you're not from
12 here, obviously, right?

13 MS. McNAMARA: 30 seconds.

14 MR. CORPUS: Okay. So we must be sitting
15 (inaudible). That used to be one reason that Seco
16 Mines -- because that used to be the place where there
17 was mines underneath. I don't know if I'm going to get
18 a sinkhole from my home. So what I'm saying is we need
19 better studies and we need to extend this opportunity
20 for us to understand. So take this as a request to --
21 for a petition to request an extension. Give us another
22 maybe three, four months and come back and do a second
23 town-hall meeting for us to continue. Maybe by then,
24 we'll be ready, and I think that's fair for the
25 community. Thank you.

1 MS. McNAMARA: Thank you. Are there other
2 participants who haven't had a chance to speak tonight?

3 MS. GLAMMEYER: Can I come and speak real
4 quick?

5 MS. POOLE: Yes, ma'am.

6 MS. McNAMARA: Yes, ma'am. I need you to
7 come to the microphone.

8 MS. GLAMMEYER: Mine were mostly questions.
9 I was just informed. I live in the area. It's mostly
10 questions I'm hoping that maybe people will just hear
11 and then they can --

12 MS. McNAMARA: Please state your name
13 first.

14 MS. GLAMMEYER: Oh, I'm sorry. Oh, my
15 gosh.

16 MS. POOLE: That's okay. I'm coming. I'm
17 coming.

18 MS. GLAMMEYER: Mary Ann Glammeyer, and the
19 questions were, you know, you hear about Barrera Street,
20 but we don't realize how huge this project is, you know?
21 And so far, I know Cenico Heights, Bass Subdivision,
22 (inaudible) Diaz, Fabrica, Hopedale, Deer Run, Thompson
23 Road, and then over there at the base. So if there's a
24 way to get like a map so that we can just be informed,
25 right, of what areas are gonna be affected.

1 Who's funding the project? Will any
2 revenues go to our city or our county? Who's liable for
3 funding for the design? Is 100 percent of the
4 construction gonna be paid for by this entity, or
5 somehow or other, it'll be trickled down through taxes
6 or something that we're going to be responsible for,
7 right?

8 Will we have any meetings? That's what we
9 need. I've heard over and over transparency. I mean,
10 there's people that have been coming to meetings and
11 they still don't know, you know, exactly what's going
12 on, and I just got started and I have so many questions.

13 On the map that you showed, it ends at
14 Hopedale Loop. So where do the 18-wheelers go from
15 there? Are they gonna go around Hopedale Loop?
16 Because, oh, my gosh, if they go out of Church's
17 Chicken, we'll never get out. You know, it's gonna --
18 they'll be at a complete stop, especially during school
19 traffic. So I don't even know how they're going to get
20 out of there.

21 The port of entry, I know that -- like I
22 said, I'm new at this, okay? So I know you-all said
23 it's gonna lessen the traffic downtown where it
24 currently is. And if the traffic comes this way, then
25 what happens to that money? I know that money is used

1 for, you know, the firemen, the police -- the police
2 department, you know, civil jobs, the City. You know,
3 what happens? Is that eventually gonna cause the entire
4 city and county to put more taxes to make the difference
5 up?

6 Environmental concerns, like everybody
7 said, if you would just -- you know, something that
8 would be simple to read that we could understand. And
9 then we noticed, on an old map, there was that
10 hazard-waste pit, and then now it's not there anymore.
11 So I was told that they weren't gonna need it, but I
12 mean, is that guaranteed? You know, if something
13 happens, is there something there that is gonna help us
14 out that -- if something were to happen? We've got an
15 elementary school right there. You know, we've got 400
16 kids. The parents are gonna be, you know, trying to get
17 into a regular road to pick up. So I'm hoping that
18 everyone is thinking about that too.

19 I was also told by a gentleman that people
20 will not have to move out of their homes, their homes
21 won't be affected. But yet, how in the world does
22 eminent domain, if it's listed in the project -- yeah,
23 if it's listed in the project, then that must mean that,
24 somewhere along the way, it could be used, right? And
25 you think about eminent domain, it's the power of the

1 government to take private property for public use, even
2 if the owner does not want to sell. Government must
3 provide just compensation. I mean, that's fair-market
4 value. Some of these homes, they've been in families
5 for generations.

6 You know, and I've seen how the floods have
7 affected them. Some of them have not even been able to
8 rebuild from the flood, and then here comes this
9 vibration from a bridge. I mean, when that train is up
10 there with all those thousands and thousands of pounds,
11 you know it's gonna vibrate.

12 MS. McNAMARA: You're past your three
13 minutes.

14 MS. GLAMMEYER: Okay.

15 MS. McNAMARA: I'm sorry.

16 MS. GLAMMEYER: If there's any way that a
17 meeting -- if you-all have any say in this, if you-all
18 could just request somebody to come and explain it in
19 simple terms. Thank you.

20 MS. McNAMARA: Thank you. Do we have
21 anyone else who hasn't had a chance to speak tonight?
22 So we have about 15 minutes left. We will be here if
23 there's somebody who hasn't spoken yet and you decide
24 you want to speak. Otherwise, we'll just be waiting for
25 the last 15 minutes.

1 (Off-record conversation.)

2 MS. McNAMARA: You have to speak into the
3 microphone if you want it on the record.

4 (Off-record conversation.)

5 MS. SOPHIA TORRES: Good evening, everyone.
6 As the relative of many generations of families here in
7 Eagle Pass, my heart grows really heavy because the
8 fate -- our fate, our lives depend on the decision that
9 will be made. So may God bless and help everyone here,
10 because if not, the end results will be absolutely
11 deadly and devastating. Thank you very much, and God
12 bless you.

13 (Off-record conversation.)

14 MS. McNAMARA: We only have a few more
15 minutes. Is there anyone that hasn't had a chance to
16 speak that wants to speak? Okay. Well, I appreciate
17 everybody's time this evening and for all of the input
18 that you've provided. I think -- you want to close or
19 stay open for a couple of minutes?

20 MS. POOLE: I'm gonna sit here for five
21 more minutes, so --

22 MS. McNAMARA: Okay. We'll be here for
23 five more minutes if there's anybody who wants to
24 comment who hasn't spoken already. You can come forward
25 during that time. And if you didn't have a chance,

1 there are written-comment forms in the back of the room,
2 and you can also provide comments online.

3 MS. SANCHEZ: Again, my name is Laura
4 Sanchez, and I just want to ask: For those people who
5 are -- and I know we're still streaming online, but for
6 those people who were not able to come and make a
7 comment today, how long is the commenting period online
8 for them to be able to make a comment?

9 MS. McNAMARA: May 5th.

10 MS. SANCHEZ: May the 5th? Okay. And it's
11 online? And has that like been posted on Facebook and
12 all that, on social media, so people can be aware that
13 they are able to make the comment? Has it been?

14 MS. McNAMARA: It was publicly noticed.

15 MS. SANCHEZ: Okay. Thank you. May
16 the 5th. Thank you.

17 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Is there like a link
18 or something?

19 MS. SANCHEZ: Yes, is there a link or
20 something to make it easy? And is it like in Spanish as
21 well as in English? Okay. Thank you.

22 MS. McNAMARA: In case you didn't hear that
23 in the back: There are QR codes that will take you to
24 the website on the comment tables.

25 MR. CORPUS: My question will be: How do

1 we get the Surface Transportation Board to actually hold
2 a town-hall meeting where we can actually get answers,
3 right? I know it's difficult; you know, you come out of
4 town. But I think it will be in the best interest, you
5 know, from -- from here, from us locally, you know, to
6 get like real answers.

7 I know that we all pay taxes. I'm not
8 sure -- I'm hoping that the Surface Transportation Board
9 is run with tax dollars, right, tax-payer dollars. So
10 how come we don't get that opportunity, right? What I'm
11 requesting is a public hearing. I'm requesting to have,
12 you know, maybe an independent review of some of the
13 studies of the air, health impacts.

14 Why not a bilingual public hearing, right,
15 where we can have the questions to get those answers?
16 What we think right now is if we can get a pause on all
17 approvals until, you know, some of our concerns are
18 actually addressed, right? Because right now, that --
19 that big research study is very complicated. So as tax
20 payers, and knowing that, you know, the Surface
21 Transportation Board is funded on the tax dollars, how
22 come some of those dollars cannot be invested in
23 community outreach, right? And (inaudible) and that
24 will, you know, help the community understand it. And
25 that's all I'm asking, an opportunity -- and this,

1 again, take it as a request, right, for an extension for
2 us to really comprehend it.

3 We know the final EIS is gonna be coming up
4 on December, so if we could push the date for us to get
5 that opportunity. So if today we're going the Draft,
6 pushing the -- providing public comment, then maybe if
7 you want -- if you cannot, you know, come and do that
8 community outreach explaining the content, then we will
9 need to find somebody to come and do it, right? And it
10 will take a few months for us to find and figure out the
11 content.

12 So we're looking September to maybe asking
13 you to hold a second public comment session and then the
14 final review, not the final, but the final draft,
15 sometime in late quarter, looking at April of 2026, to
16 be fair and just for everybody.

17 That's my request, hoping that there's a
18 month available for the Surface Transportation Board to
19 do that kind of community outreach. And why not bring
20 our representatives so maybe they can help us completely
21 understand this content that is very difficult for many
22 of us to understand? I think a lot of people did not
23 even get a chance to browse this. I saw it. So I thank
24 you in hoping that you will understand our situation,
25 and the tax payers are making that request. Thank you.

1 MS. McNAMARA: Thank you. We're at the end
2 of our meeting, so I appreciate all of your time
3 tonight. Thank you for coming and providing your
4 comments.

5 (Meeting adjourned at 8:00 p.m.)
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in stenographic shorthand, and that my stenographic
notes were thereafter reduced to writing by
computer-assisted transcription by me and/or under my
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I further certify that the foregoing is a
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GIVEN UNDER MY HAND, I have hereto set my
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