

EI-22739



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From: "dkvlasaty@juno.com" <dkvlasaty@juno.com>
To: david.navecky@stb.dot.gov

Dear Mr. Navecky,

I attended the question and answer session with Frank Patton in Morris last Monday

I was very disappointed in his attitude, which made one feel that rural people, and fertile farmland, are expendable, inconsequential, and of little monetary value to him.

I didn't understand why he came to answer questions, when he was unprepared to explain HOW the engineers would work around the fields to make sure there would be no damage to drainage and irrigation, and prevent flooding and killing of crops. Or to explain HOW the Emergency responders would be able to be trained, have equipment for dangerous spills, and HOW they would get around the freight train to respond to fires or medical emergencies.

Some of these farms have been in the families for 4-5 generations, over 100 years. They are to be passed down to the next generation, to feed America. He stated that the Midwest does not have any products, or way to transport goods, to the world. Currently our grain trucks take their yields to barges on the Illinois River, which then go to New Orleans for foreign shipment. He seems unaware of the work a farmer does, and can't value it.

I do not understand how a private venture could ever take private land with Eminent Domain for their own profit, at the expense of the citizens' livelihood.

He blew off as irrelevant concerns about problems with livestock from noise and vibrations. Also irrelevant was how to make quiet crossings safe.

Why can't the proposed railroad go along I-80 and I-39? Why can't it tie into existing, under-used lines, or along decommissioned railways? At the very least, why don't they plan to put it along farm boundaries, so that the farms are not cut, making them almost impossible to farm profitably?

At all the informational meetings, both by the STB and individual towns, the turnouts have been in the hundreds, despite being in rural areas with scattered populations. This should demonstrate to the STB, DOT, and all our representatives, in county, state, and federal government, that the residents feel strongly about having their land appropriated for private gain, at the expense of their families.

Please do not let this plan proceed as one that goes down the middle of prime agriculture land.

Sincerely,

Karen Vlasaty

Paw Paw, Illinois