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RE-EP-749-1 PROPOSED RULEMAKING TO LIMIT NITUs TO A MAXIMUM OF SIX (6) 180 DAY EXTENSIONS

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

I fully support the above mentioned Rule, having been a party to a NITU on an abandonment myself. The present criteria of the STB to allow unlimited NITU extension is excessive and unfair to landowners.

The Abandonment that went thru my land and split my farm from end to end, was really about a 5 year ordeal. The train spotted running for over 3 years and the line left unpatrolled for all that time; allowing ATVS, 4 Wheelers, Jeeps, foot traffics etc to have a back door access to our farm. Even fugitives from the law used it, one such case, the car caught fire on one of smaller trestle and burned the auto and damaged the trestle on my brother's property. Thieves used this to access our land and steal game cameras and hay equipment from our neighbor. Once vandals stole a tractor, drove it down the tracks and then let it push against the mountain until it ran out of fuel.

All the land that this went thru was private farm land where I lived, my own farm was purchased by my father in 1948, and many of my neighbors basically the same, family farm land. We are all small cattle farms, but farmers feeding the nation. It is our way of life. I praise God for our forefathers who set aside some natural forest to preserve for everyone to use; but our farms are not for everyone to use. They are our farms—our homes; just as your home is your home and your yard, your yard; your small place of **sanctuary**. We **all** need a place to feel safe and where no one can intrude on our way of life.

This unlimited policy of NITU extensions and the process in general almost ruined my sanctuary. I have been blessed in that this old farm that I am blessed to live on, has given me peace and comfort. While many can't function without some form of medicine or alcohol to survive the day; I have the farm. It is my safe haven and my sanctuary, where I lose my stress and fears, I was born here and I still own the house I was born in, delivered by an old county doctor; but for about 5 years, there was stress and lots of it. I was fighting for my life so to speak as I was fighting for my **safe haven** that was almost taken from me by strangers and given to unknowns. We have lots of illegal immigrants in this area and some were trespassing on us down this abandoned line. The abandoned line on my property was taken thru condemnation "for railway use only" yet someone tried to take it for other purposes. Our small group of landowners could not afford legal fees therefore we worked together to hold our land, but it took many sleepless nights and stress which now I suffer from Coronary Artery Disease and other problems that either was brought on by this worry and stress or worsened by it because extensions were allowed even after they had run out. Please at least put limits on the NITUs.