

In The Matter Of:
*Public Scoping Meeting For The EIS On The
Great Lakes Basin Rail Line*

*La Porte, IN
April 14, 2016*

*Midwest Reporting, Inc.
1448 Lincoln Way East
South Bend, Indiana 46613*

PUBLIC SCOPING MEETING FOR THE EIS ON THE
GREAT LAKES BASIN RAIL LINE

DATE: Thursday, April 14, 2016

TIME: 5:12 o'clock p.m.

PLACE: La Porte Civic Auditorium
1001 Ridge Street
La Porte, Indiana

The proceedings of the above-mentioned and
foregoing matter taken pursuant to notice as to the time and
place.

Before Michelle M. Miller, Court Reporter
Notary Public, La Porte County, Indiana

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APPEARANCES:

Dave Navecky, Surface Transportation Board

Phillis Johnson-Ball, Surface Transportation Board

Alan Summerville, ICF International

Laura Ziemke, ICF International

Tiffany Mendoza, ICF International

* * * * *

Comments marked with ** were made directly to reporter

* * * * *

1 ** MRS. HELMKEN: Our concern is the location of the
2 train coming through in coordination with our business out of
3 our home. We have Toddle Tykes Daycare, LLC, on 5301 South
4 State Road 39 in La Porte. And I'm guessing it's 500 to 800
5 feet from the centerline of where the train is supposed to
6 come through on 39 South. And I'm just concerned with the
7 closeness proximity of our business. We have like a \$125,000
8 of gross income coming in from our business at that location
9 and what it will do to that. That's it.

10 ** MR. KAMINISKI: My name's William Kaminiski. I
11 live at 703 North 625 East, which is just outside of
12 Westville. And my -- from the way I look at the map, it's
13 only gonna be about a quarter of a mile from my house. And I
14 am totally against this. I don't know how it's gonna benefit
15 me. Benefit me, my neighbors. If -- if somebody could
16 please tell me how it's gonna benefit me, I -- maybe they can
17 sway me but I doubt it.

18 Another concern is I understand there's gonna be a
19 102 trains going back and forth in a 24-hour period, and
20 that's just way too much noise and that close to my backyard.
21 And I would say the rest of my neighbors feel the same way.
22 I have safety issues. The -- my property value. I am really
23 concerned about that. I moved out to the country to stay in
24 the country to be in the country to be in quiet, and now all
25 of a sudden I'm gonna have a -- I don't know if it's gonna be

1 two -- two lane tracks or four or what, but it's not gonna do
2 anything good for me. Not gonna help my property values.
3 And I'm against it.

4 Thank you.

5 ** MR. COULTER: All right. My name's John Coulter,
6 C-o-u-l-t-e-r. My concern is where the branch comes off at
7 Westville and heads towards the KOP, if it was to join up
8 with the Canadian National track at Haskell Heights right
9 at -- or -- they're already joining up with it. But that
10 single line could go right into KOP with a rail right on
11 their easement on that railroad track. That would save all
12 the crossings that would be created with that spur that's
13 just a dead end into KOP that the Great Lakes whale --
14 Railway is proposing. Meaning if they could add their rail
15 to the Canadian National, it would go right into the KOP
16 right there. And they already got a spur going onto that
17 track, and then they actually cross each other right as they
18 go into the KOP. Should I talk on some other items?

19 COURT REPORTER: You can talk about whatever
20 you -- you want to be --

21 MR. COULTER: That has to do --

22 COURT REPORTER: -- as part of the record.

23 MR. COULTER: -- with this?

24 COURT REPORTER: Right. Yes.

25 MR. COULTER: All right.

1 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: But you only get three
2 minutes when you get up to talk. Talk to her for a half
3 hour. She gets paid by the hour, too.

4 ** MR. COULTER: Their mainline is coming through
5 somewhere around mile marker 7 and 9 on real high organic
6 marshland, and that's where they're proposing to build a
7 bridge over the top of the Canadian National -- no, the CSX.
8 And that's really poor soil type, meaning they need to really
9 do soil boring around there to see if all that could support
10 a bridge of that statute there. I think --

11 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: She's learning so much
12 doing this.

13 ** MR. COULTER: And I think like Forrest Gump,
14 that's all I have to say about that.

15 Somewhere between mile marker 7 and 9 we farm a
16 lotta ground there that has tile under it. So if they decide
17 that this is where it's gonna be, we really need to work
18 together with them to help our drainage. 'Cause with the
19 right ditches along the new railroad track, we could probably
20 have better drainage than we have now. But we've put some
21 fresh tile in there. So meaning if this does have to happen,
22 we really wanna work together with them the best we can
23 through our property.

24 Now that's all I have to say about that.

25 MR. NAVECKY: Thank you for coming.

1 I just wanted to make a brief announcement on the
2 format of this evening's meeting. For the next half hour or
3 so, until 6:00 o'clock, we're going to be maintaining this
4 open house-type format. I encourage you to go back and look
5 at the poster boards and -- and the maps we have laid out in
6 the back. And to come up to any of us. There are ten of us
7 here this evening. Two of us from the Surface Transportation
8 Board, and eight other folks from our consulting firm that
9 are helping in -- us in this environmental review process.
10 We all have these -- these name tags on, and we'd be happy
11 to -- to answer any questions or address any concerns you
12 might have.

13 And then at 6:00 o'clock I'll be giving a
14 presentation that will last about 30 minutes. And after the
15 presentation we will have a -- a formal -- formal -- formal
16 oral comment period where folks can come up to this
17 microphone and provide their oral comments, which will be
18 recorded by the -- the court reporter over here to my left.
19 So for the next half hour, we're going to maintain this open
20 house format. And if you have questions you'd like to ask us
21 one on one, just track us down, and we will do our best to
22 help you out.

23 Thank you.

24 One more thing, folks, I wanted to mention. We do
25 have a court reporter up here. She's essentially here to --

1 to help us and record comments. If anyone is uncomfortable
2 or would prefer to come here and speak to her one on one, up
3 until like 6:00 o'clock you're -- you're welcome to come up
4 and provide your comments to her one on one and she'll record
5 those for us.

6 Thank you.

7 ** MR. HAMILL: My name is Nick Hamill. I'm the
8 chairman of the La Porte County Libertarian Party. I'm
9 here -- actually here more for an information gathering
10 aspect for everybody with a couple other people from the
11 party. But just my first impressions would be on this is
12 that it's a -- an incredible expenditure for something that
13 doesn't seem like it will affect very many people other than
14 negatively. So I'm hoping that there's a little more
15 explanation. I'm hoping there's a rational plan, if it is
16 something that's gonna be done seriously. Otherwise, I feel
17 that this is something that seems like somebody's pet project
18 and it might be running amok.

19 So I appreciate your time. Thank you very much.

20 ** MS. RAINFORD: Shawna Rainford and I want to know
21 how dangerous a spill could be? What could it do with our
22 environment, our wildlife, our wells? Seeing that a ton of
23 Westville is on wells, we would like to know the danger of
24 that, what kind chemicals are coming through specifically,
25 and what the ICF is going to check out to make sure that the

1 environment is safe around us?

2 That's it.

3 ** MR. GROSS: My name is Johnathon Gross. We are
4 concerned about whether or not the vibration coming off the
5 trains would be enough to like shake houses off of
6 foundations. And also the amount of noise pollution that
7 would be emitted from the trains.

8 I think that -- Ame, is there any other the
9 questions? Noise --

10 MRS. GROSS: No, --

11 MR. GROSS: -- pollution --

12 MRS. GROSS: -- we asked 'em all.

13 MR. GROSS: Vibration.

14 MRS. GROSS: You asked about the vibration, if
15 it's gonna damage the wells, the septic, the leach fields.

16 MR. GROSS: Right, she asked about that.

17 MRS. GROSS: The houses off their foundations.

18 MR. GROSS: Yes. With hers and mine, yes. Is
19 that it?

20 MRS. GROSS: And is the noise --

21 MR. GROSS: I asked about noise.

22 MRS. GROSS: -- and the building of the railroad
23 track if it's gonna make our wildlife go away.

24 So I think we're good.

25 ** MS. HANDLEY: Okay. My name is Lynn Handley,

1 H-a-n-d-l-e-y. Live at 3149 South Holmsville Road, La Porte,
2 Indiana, 46350.

3 One of our main concerns is the proximity of the
4 gas or the pipeline, which is immediately south of our
5 residence. It crosses all the way over towards Highway 421
6 and will be direct -- the -- the path of the rail, proposed
7 rail crosses over that -- that line. A subdivision was
8 denied access to that area, that property, because of the
9 pipeline so no road could be put over it. So we are
10 concerned about how a rail could possibly cross over it if a
11 road could not be driven over it. There is also a cemetery
12 right around the corner there on 350. So there's a couple
13 issues there.

14 Also, there's a hill directly across from us,
15 which is part of where the cro -- the rail is proposed. And
16 all that water, we have a big water runoff that directly
17 affects the people across the street from us and then
18 infringes upon our property as well. It comes south, you
19 know, it drifts down from the hill. So there's a lotta -- a
20 water issue already, and we can only foresee that being
21 increased with something going through there. And we're
22 talking we are probably only 800 feet away from where this
23 rail is proposed, and we will actually be affected by it
24 twice. Once on Holmsville and immediately again on Highway
25 2. So we'll have no access to where we -- well, where we

1 travel all the time.

2 The vibration, the animal life, all of our
3 wildlife, our -- our pets, the elderly woman in our home, all
4 these -- the noise levels, the vibration, we'll be right
5 downwind from all this and it -- it's -- it's horrifying.
6 We -- we just are petrified about the quality of life that
7 will -- will happen if this goes through. And don't
8 understand why it has to come through going directly to
9 La Porte if it is already in fact going south of Westville
10 along Route 6 and terminating in Kingsbury. It would seem it
11 would -- if there's already one going east to Kingsbury, why
12 they couldn't go north from there to connect to the line that
13 they're wanting to in the La Porte area, rather than cutting
14 all the way through and affecting two -- two groups of
15 people. And it makes a huge triangle of people devastated.

16 And that's all I have at this time.

17 ** MR. WILLIAMSON: My name's Warren Williamson. The
18 train is going to go about a 150 feet behind my house, and
19 I'm mostly concerned about my septic field is behind my house
20 and it's within a few feet of where the tracks are gonna go.

21 I'm concerned about the flooding in the area. And
22 there's also a cow farm across the street. It's a milk farm.
23 And I'm -- I've heard stories about, you know, cows not being
24 able to produce milk when, you know, they hear really loud
25 noises. That's it.

1 (Break.)

2 MS. ZIEMKE: Ladies and gentlemen, can I please
3 have your attention? We're going to go ahead and get started
4 in the ne -- the presentation. We do have quite a number of
5 seats up front here if there are any people standing who'd
6 like to come forward and take a seat.

7 All right. Well, thank you very much for coming
8 this evening. This is a scoping meeting for the Great Lakes
9 Basin Rail Environmental Impact Statement. The first thing
10 I'd like to do is ask everyone if they could please turn off
11 their cells phones or move them to vibrate.

12 This evening's meeting will be in two -- two
13 sections. The first -- the first section will be a
14 presentation. And then after the presentation we'll have
15 oral comments. After the presentation I'll just give -- I'll
16 give the guidelines for the oral comment.

17 At this time I'd like to introduce Dave Navecky
18 with the Surface Transportation Board.

19 MR. NAVECKY: Good evening, everyone. Thank you
20 very much for -- for coming. This is our 5th meeting this
21 week on the proposed rail line, and they've all been very
22 well attended. And we're happy to see that and the -- the
23 more people that are here, the more comments we get, and it
24 helps improve the -- the quality of our -- the document we'll
25 eventually be preparing. And so I -- again, I'd like to

1 welcome you to the -- the scoping meeting for the
2 environmental impact statement for the proposed Great Lakes
3 Basin Rail Line.

4 In my presentation this evening, we'll first start
5 out with some introductions. It will provide an overview of
6 the Surface Transportation Board and our Environmental Impact
7 Statement process. We'll discuss the purpose and need of the
8 proposed project. And we'll provide a description of what's
9 being proposed. And then I'm gonna walk you through a couple
10 websites that have some resources for you that will help you
11 participate in our environmental review process and then also
12 enable you to gain more information and collect more
13 information about the proposed project.

14 Next slide, please. Okay. Again, my name is Dave
15 Navecky. I'm with the Surface Transportation Board, and
16 we're located in Washington, D.C. I'm the environmental
17 lead for our agency in the preparation of this Environmental
18 Impact Statement. And also tonight there is Phillis
19 Johnson-Ball from the Surface Transportation Board seated at
20 the table here. She's the deputy director of the Office of
21 Environmental Analysis. And also with us tonight we have a
22 consulting firm that's helping us prepare this talk. And
23 it's gonna be a -- a large talk, and it requires a lot of
24 technical experts that we don't have within our agency,
25 whether they're noise specialists or water falling

1 specialists. And just the -- the size of this project and
2 the -- and the -- the detail that we're gonna need to
3 address, we just don't have the capabilities within our
4 agency to handle that. So we have a consulting firm that's
5 helping us. And at the table is Alan Summerville. He's the
6 project manager per ICF that's helping us with the project.
7 And the -- the other folks, there are seven other folks from
8 ICF that are -- that are around the -- the room with their
9 name tags, there's also from ICF helping us with this
10 project.

11 Next slide, please. The Surface Transportation
12 Board. We're a small agency located in Washington, D.C.
13 "Small" meaning there's about a 150 folks in our entire
14 agency. We're all located in one office. The Office of
15 Environmental Analysis, which is the office I work in, is
16 about ten folks. And we're responsible for assisting our
17 agency in complying with environmental statutes, federal and
18 environmental statutes.

19 Our agency, the Surface Transportation Board, has
20 the authority over the freight railroad industry in the
21 United States, including authority -- or a license is
22 required from our agency before a freight rail line --
23 freight railroad can construct and operate a new rail line.

24 The board will review the project based on its
25 transportation merits and the potential environmental

1 impacts. Transportation merits is considered by another
2 group of people within our agency. I know a lotta you folks
3 are concerned about the transportation merits and the purpose
4 and need. There are -- that's not the -- the focus of the
5 work that I'm doing and our team is doing, but there will be
6 folks in our agency that are looking at the transportation
7 merits of the proposed rail line.

8 We're here tonight to help you participate in our
9 environmental review process. The board -- at the completion
10 of the environmental review process and at the completion of
11 the evaluation of the transportation merits, the board will
12 issue a final decision about this project. That decision
13 will -- can either result in the project being denied, being
14 approved, or granted, or being granted with conditions. And
15 a project like this, because of the potential environmental
16 impacts, there likely would be conditions imposed on the
17 project if it were approved. So it's -- most likely would be
18 a deny or grant-with-conditions situation with this project.

19 Next slide, please. So what we're here for is
20 we're kicking off the environmental review process for this
21 large project, and the first stage of that project is
22 scoping. And what we mean by "scoping" is we're trying --
23 trying to identify the scope of the environmental review that
24 we're going to be conducting. Scope including what issues
25 should we be looking at? What alternatives should be --

1 should we be looking at? And a critical part of scoping is
2 for us to come to the communities to hear your concerns, what
3 the issues are to you, how it could potentially affect you?
4 As I said, we're from Washington, D.C., so we're not familiar
5 with the issues that you have with how this project could
6 impact you.

7 So we're here to hear your comments, and those
8 comments will help us to find the scope of our study. We've
9 heard some very good comments since we've been here this week
10 on impacts on -- on farm operations, on drainage tile systems
11 on the farms, on noise and vibration issues for both homes
12 and schools, for example. There are concerns about delays,
13 traffic delays at grade crossings. There are concerns about
14 the response time for firemen and emergency medical service
15 providers at crossings. Those are all the -- the comments
16 that we're -- we're hearing, and those are -- those are very
17 good comments, and we wanna continue collecting those
18 comments from you folks, because we will study all those
19 issues in our Environmental Impact Statement.

20 We're also -- in scoping we're also looking for
21 suggestions from you folks on potential alternative routes
22 for the rail line. And we're getting suggestions from folks
23 about using, for example, this route based on an abandoned
24 rail line that's -- that's still there. And so those are the
25 type of suggestions we're looking for from you folks, whether

1 or not it -- it doesn't necessarily have to be an abandoned
2 rail line. That's just a suggestion. Maybe just a -- an
3 alternative route that would minimize some of the impacts of
4 one of the proposed routes we're currently looking at.

5 We're also interested in -- in hearing suggestions
6 on potential mitigation. If this project were to go through,
7 how fast could we mitigate those potential impacts? Whether
8 they're impacts on farming operations or delays of school
9 buses getting to school, any of those type issues, we're --
10 we're eager to hear any suggestions you might have.

11 Not -- in addition to these meetings that we're
12 having during the scoping process, we started out this
13 process by sending out letters to about 1900 parties that are
14 federal, state, and local agencies, chambers of commerce,
15 police departments, fire departments, other interested
16 parties. And we've been doing -- trying to do a lot of
17 advertising. Been advertising on the internet trying to
18 reach as many parties as we can. People that might be
19 potentially im -- impacted by this project. And we're
20 soliciting comments from all those folks. So we're -- so
21 it's -- it's the local folks that would reside next to the
22 proposed rail line, the farmers, the federal agencies, the
23 state agencies, we're hearing a lot from the -- the county
24 and state farm bureaus. And so it's -- we're getting some
25 really good information and we wanna continue for you to

1 provide those comments.

2 We'll take all those comments we get from scoping
3 from everyone, and we'll develop what we refer to as a final
4 scope of study. It's -- it'll be basically at annotated
5 outline of what's gonna be included in our Environmental
6 Impact Statement. The final scope of study will also
7 identify the alternatives that we're gonna study in the
8 Environmental Impact Statement. They'll be alternatives
9 that -- that my team comes up with, and they'll be likely the
10 alternatives that you folks have suggested. And they'll all
11 be folded into the Environmental Impact Statement.

12 Next slide, please. So after we prepare the draft
13 Environmental Impact Statement -- I mean, issue the final
14 scope of study, it's time to prepare the draft Environmental
15 Impact Statement. And there's gonna be a lotta work that we
16 need to do to -- to get that document prepared. We're
17 gonna -- there's gonna be a lotta data we need to collect.
18 We'll get those from local agencies, state agencies, federal
19 agencies. We're gonna have to do some -- some modeling,
20 computer modeling. For example, we'll be modeling noise
21 impacts from the proposed rail lines. We're gonna have to do
22 fieldwork likely related to identifying open boundaries.
23 Doing some archeological surveys. We're gonna have to do
24 some noise monitoring. That would be -- kinda establish the
25 baseline of existing noise levels. And we'll take all that

1 information and prepare the draft Environmental Impact
2 Statement, and we'll identify all the potential environmental
3 impacts for the proposed project.

4 We'll also identify preliminary mitigating
5 measures that would reduce, avoid, or -- or minimize those
6 potential impacts. Those will be listed in the doc -- in the
7 document. And that will all be collected and issued in -- in
8 the draft Environmental Impact Statement.

9 Now, everyone that's been requested to get on our
10 notification list, we've been asking folks to -- to fill out
11 the cards at -- at the front desk. Anyone that's filled out
12 those cards, we have your address or your e-mail address,
13 you're gonna be receiving notifications about the project.
14 We've encouraged people to go to our project website, which
15 I'll get to in a little bit, to sign up to receive
16 notifications about the project. So, for example, when we
17 issue the final scope of study, and when we issue this draft
18 Environmental Impact Statement, you're gonna be notified that
19 those documents are available for -- for you to look at.

20 So particularly when we draft -- issue the draft
21 EIS, we're gonna send that out, and what we want you folks to
22 do is take a look at that document and provide us comments.
23 Did we -- did we look at the issues properly? Did we not
24 address an -- an issue in -- in enough detail? Did we miss
25 an issue? You know, we want you to comment on mitigation.

1 This mitigation, do you think did we go far enough with the
2 mitigation? Should there be more mitigation? So we're gonna
3 ask you -- we'll setup a comment period for that -- that --
4 for your review of that draft EIS. I'm not sure when that'll
5 be at this point. But we ask for you to provide us comments,
6 written comments on that.

7 We'll also be back out here in the project area
8 for two or three weeks having more meetings like this for you
9 to provide input to us on the draft EIS. And then -- and
10 then that draft EIS is also going out to all the local,
11 federal, and state agencies for them to provide comments as
12 well.

13 Next slide, please. So at the end of the -- the
14 comment period on the draft EIS, we'll take all those
15 comments, and I'm expecting we're gonna have hundreds, if not
16 thousands of comments on this project, because of the --
17 the -- one, because of the large size of the project area,
18 and also because of the issues that we're hearing from you
19 folks. We -- there's a lot of interest in this project, and
20 you guys have a lot of concerns, valid concerns about the
21 project. So we're expecting to -- to hear -- receive a lot
22 of comments on -- on the draft EIS.

23 So we're gonna take those comments and begin going
24 through all of them and deciding what we need to do to
25 address them. And we will be addressing every comment in the

1 final EIS that we'll eventually prepare. Some of your
2 comments might simply be a -- require us -- the response in
3 clarifying an issue for you. Some of them might require a
4 response that kinda points you in the draft EIS where that
5 information's gonna be located. It's gonna be a -- a large
6 document, hundreds of pages long. They're are gonna be
7 technical appendies -- appendices. And so that information
8 might be in there, you just weren't able to -- to -- to find
9 it. So our response might simply be this is where the
10 information is located.

11 Some of your comments might require us to do some
12 more work. We might have to do some more anal -- analytical
13 work. We might have to do some more modeling. Some of your
14 comments might even have to require us to -- to come back out
15 in the field and -- and collect some more data. So it's --
16 it's not -- you know, I can't give you a time frame on when
17 the final EIS would be issued. But when we have all that
18 work done, we will issue the final EIS. And, again, you'll
19 all be notified by the method, by your preferred method,
20 whether that's by mail or e-mail.

21 We're estimating that the time to complete to get
22 to the final EIS is gonna be a minimum of two to three years.
23 It's gonna take us some time to get this document prepared
24 'cause there's a lot to cover. And I know there's been some
25 reports in -- in the press that the construction might start

1 in 18 months, and that's just -- that's just not gonna
2 happen. We have too much work to do as far as adequately
3 identifying and -- and evaluating all the environmental
4 review -- all -- evaluating all the environmental issues.

5 But once I -- once we issue the final EIS, it will
6 include some recommendations from my office within our
7 agency, the Office of Environmental Analysis. We don't
8 recommend whether a project should be approved or denied, but
9 we have -- identify some other recommendations. If the board
10 chooses to approve this project, we recommend that they adopt
11 a pre -- a -- a preferred alternative that we've identified
12 based upon the potential environmental impacts. Kinda the
13 environmentally-preferred alternative.

14 We also recommend that if they choose to approve
15 this project, that they impose environmental mitigation on
16 the project. And we'll likely have a lengthy list of
17 mitigation measures. They could number in the hundreds
18 because of a project of this size and complex -- and
19 complexity.

20 So that final EIS with those recommendations go to
21 our board, the surface transporta -- the actual board
22 members. The board members -- the board currently consists
23 of three members. We were recently authorized to increase
24 to five. Those two members have not been nominated or
25 confirmed as -- the board members are nominated by the

1 president and confirmed by the Senate. And the party -- and
2 it's a bipartisan board. And the party in the White House
3 represents the party majority on the board. So currently we
4 have two Democrats and one Republican.

5 And how they make a decision is they -- they come
6 informed on all the issues on the project. They consider
7 both the transportation merits, which is an evaluation which
8 is conducted by other folks within our agency, and they
9 consider the entire environmental record. What -- what that
10 means is they consider the draft EIS, all the comments we
11 received on the draft EIS, and the final EIS. And they take
12 that environmental information and the transportation merits
13 information and they basically vote on it. They do vote on
14 it. And so the majority decision prevails.

15 So if we continue to have three members at the
16 time this is voted on, it would take at least two members to
17 vote to deny it, to deny the project. And it would take two
18 members to vote yes to approve the project. If we are five
19 members at the time, it would take three members to vote to
20 approve or three members to deny it.

21 After the board issues that final decision, there
22 are gonna be other federal agencies that need to make
23 decisions, and they typically wait until after the lead
24 agency in the environmental review, which in this case is the
25 Surface Transportation Board, issues its decision. We know,

1 for example, the Army Corps of Engineer's is gonna have to
2 issue a decision related to -- to wetland impacts. And the
3 U.S. Coast Guard is gonna need to make a decision related
4 to -- to bridge crossings, the bridges over the -- on several
5 major ridge -- rivers in the project area.

6 Next slide, please. Now, I'd like to discuss
7 the -- the purpose and need. And we have it labeled here as
8 the applicant's purpose and need because this is -- this is
9 not our project. This project -- when I say "our," I'm
10 referring to the Surface Transportation Board. We did not
11 come up with this idea. We didn't determine there's a need
12 for this rail line. We didn't state that there's a purpose
13 for this rail line. We're strictly a licensing agency. And
14 when a -- when a railroad comes to us with a request to
15 construct and operate a new rail line, our agency is
16 obligated to review that request. So that's what we're
17 doing.

18 So the -- the purpose and need for this project
19 comes from the applicant. It doesn't come from my agency.
20 And although as I mentioned a short time ago, that purpose
21 and need issue will be considered in the -- as the agency
22 reviews the transportation merits of the project. But that's
23 done by another group of folks in our agency. What we're
24 here to focus on tonight is the environmental review.

25 So anyways, the purpose and need for this project,

1 based on what's been provided to us by the Great Lakes Basin
2 Transportation folks is to provide the Class I railroads and
3 a regional railroad that currently utilize the Chicago
4 metropolitan rail network with a more -- with more efficient
5 rail operations that would enable freight traffic to bypass
6 the congested Chicago rail network. And bypass meaning that
7 would be -- or train traffic that is neither destined for
8 Chicago nor does it originate in Chicago. It has no need to
9 stop in Chicago. It just needs to get by or through Chicago.
10 So the purpose of the rail line, according to the Great Lakes
11 folks, is to avoid that congested rail network.

12 The other purpose of the project is to, according
13 to the Great Lakes folks, is to add capacity to the regional
14 rail network. And that would accommodate both existing and
15 potential future rail traffic while avoiding major population
16 centers.

17 Next slide, please. The applicant's proposed
18 action. What the proposed action is basically a description
19 of what they're proposing for this -- for this particular
20 rail line. And this, again, is coming from the Great Lakes
21 Basin folks. They es -- they -- they come up with alignment.
22 The alignment that you see on the tables in the back and
23 which you've seen in maps on the internet, that's what they
24 propose for us to consider in our Environmental Impact
25 Statement.

1 Their alignment is approximately 278 miles long.
2 It extends generally from -- from Northwestern Indiana
3 through Illinois and into Southern Wisconsin. The
4 Wisconsin -- the Northern Illinois wis -- and Southern
5 Wisconsin ends of the route would be single tracked because
6 they're expecting less traffic in that area. But much of
7 the -- the rail line would be double tracked, including the
8 section going up towards La Porte. There would be a section
9 that would be triple tracked, meaning there are three
10 side-by-side tracks, that would be located near Manteno. And
11 that's related to a rail terminal that they have proposed
12 near Manteno. I'll come back to that in a second.

13 Locally, the -- I had question about this
14 earlier -- locally there's the Kingsbury subdivision, which
15 is a line bearing off to the east from the mainline that
16 they're proposing, and that would be single tracked, not
17 double tracked.

18 And as I mentioned, they are proposing a -- a rail
19 terminal near Manteno. That would be used to -- for
20 switching purposes and also for servicing and maintaining
21 locomotives and rail cars. Both the locomotives and rail
22 cars that would be owned by the Great Lakes Basin folks and
23 also the locomotives and -- and rail cars of their -- their
24 customers.

25 Next slide, please. This here is just a -- one of

1 the maps we have available for you on our project website of
2 the proposed rail line. Again, beginning in Northwest
3 terin -- Indiana coming through Illinois heading north and
4 going up into Southern Wisconsin.

5 Next slide, please. So now what I'd like to do is
6 go over some website resources for you that will help you
7 participate in our process and -- and become informed about
8 our process and also -- and also the environmental review
9 process. Sorry about that. I think that's better. We'll
10 give it a try.

11 So I wanted to go over some website resources for
12 you. There -- there are two. The one we have here is the --
13 the home page from my agency, the Surface Transportation
14 Board. And you'll see it -- it's not as pretty as the next
15 one I'm gonna show you. It's a little antiquated but -- one
16 thing I wanted to point out to you is that there's a --
17 you're not gonna -- most of you can't read this, I'm sure,
18 but there is a -- a blue bar across the top, and there are a
19 number of -- of buttons there. Two of 'em I wanna point out
20 to you.

21 The first is the button on the far left, and it
22 says, "E-filing." And this is where you go to provide us
23 your comments electronically through our website, if that's
24 what you'd like to do. Some people are -- like to do that,
25 and other people just like to send in handwritten notes. But

1 if you go to this button and put your cursor over it, you'll
2 get a -- a drop-down menu, which only includes one item, so
3 I'm not sure why we need a drop-down menu. But it -- it'll
4 drop down. You'll see "E-filing." You'll click on that.
5 Then on the next page it shows up there'll be a -- a label
6 titled, "Environmental Comments," on -- on the right-hand
7 page of the second -- of the next page. You click on that
8 and it opens up a form for you to enter your comments.

9 We'd like you to -- in that form we like you to at
10 least provide your -- your name. And I think it may also
11 request that you provide your -- your address and e-mail.
12 But at a minimum it'll require you to provide -- provide your
13 name. If you don't provide us your address or e-mail, if
14 you're not already on our notification list, we won't be able
15 to add you to our notification list. And on the form there
16 will be a box in which you can type in then the text of your
17 comment. But it -- it has -- it's kind of a limited space.
18 I don't know how many characters that are provided off the
19 top of my head. But it's -- but based on the comment letters
20 we're getting so far, that little bit of space is not gonna
21 be large enough to accommodate the -- the comments that
22 you're providing us so --

23 You also have the option of attaching documents to
24 your comments. You can attach a Word document. You can
25 attach a PDF document. You can pack -- attach JPEG files, if

1 you have pictures of your property or a resource you're
2 particularly concerned with. You can attach can pictures.
3 You know, just ask that you explain, you know, what we're
4 looking at in those pictures in your written comments.

5 The other thing I wanted to mention to you is our
6 agency tries to maintain a -- a very transparent process.
7 And part of that effort is that every letter that we receive
8 on this project, whether it's from you or any agency,
9 federal, state, or local agency, or if we get a letter from
10 the Great Lakes Transportation folks, that goes up on our
11 website so everybody can take a look at it. So if you wanna
12 go up in -- in there and look and see what other of your --
13 neighbors are -- are saying about the project or what your --
14 your county agencies or state agencies might be saying about
15 the project, you'll be able to go on our website and look at
16 those letters.

17 We also have -- we also place on there letters
18 that are going out from our agency, from our office of
19 environmental analysis. So if we're writing a letter to the
20 Great Lakes Basin folks requesting them -- requesting
21 information from them, and we are gonna need more information
22 from them to do this environmental review, you'll be able to
23 see what questions we're asking them. And you're providing
24 us some of those questions. You've asked us some questions
25 and -- and I have to you -- you know, it's a very good

1 question, we're adding it to our list. And -- and then when
2 the Great Lakes Basin folks reply to our letter, that will go
3 up here as well and -- on our website. And where -- where
4 you'll find those letters is in the middle of this blue bar
5 there's a button labeled, "Environmental Matters." You put
6 your cursor over that button and you get a drop-down menu.
7 And in that menu is the button labeled, "Environmental
8 Correspondence." And you click on that and our environmental
9 correspondence database pops up. And you'll need to search
10 that database using our project number. It's -- it's re --
11 in our brochure and other things you've seen it's -- it's
12 actually a -- we call it a docket number, docket No. FD35952.
13 We try to place that number all over our -- our items. It's
14 kind of our project number. It enables us to keep track
15 of -- of correspondence and to -- and to file it away in the
16 right location. So you'll be able to search by that docket
17 number and look for all the incoming correspondence under
18 35952, and you'll be able to look for all outgoing
19 correspondence on that project number, and you'll see what's
20 going on with this project.

21 Next slide, please. This is a big project. Lots
22 of information that's coming into us, and we're trying to
23 heed a lot of information back to you folks. You can gain a
24 better understanding of what -- what's been proposed, what
25 our environmental review process is. So we've -- we've

1 prepared a specific website that my agency prepared for this
2 project. And I forgot to mention that. The -- the address
3 for our agency website is on the brochure. It's
4 www.stb.dot.gov. And we have this project-specific website
5 that we've prepared. Again, this is our website. It's not
6 the railroad's website. This is our website. And the
7 website address is in -- on the brochure also. That's
8 greatlakesbasinraileis.com. And I think we have a lot of
9 useful information in here.

10 We -- if there are any major project updates, we
11 put it on on the home page. For example, we added two -- two
12 scoping meetings, one this week and one next week. We put
13 that up here. We had to change the venue in -- in Lowell
14 because we decided that based on the information we were
15 seeing in the press, that there was gonna be a lot of
16 interest in this project. And we also got a call from a
17 local elected official that the -- the venue we had proposed
18 in Lowell wasn't gonna be large enough so we changed venues.
19 And we put that information on the website, too.

20 We have a place where you can go to get another
21 overview of our environmental review process. There's a
22 place called, "Public Involvement," and that -- currently
23 that provides a list of all these scoping meetings that we're
24 having here.

25 We're also hosting a -- a -- an on-line scoping

1 meeting. That'll be two weeks from yesterday on April 27th.
2 That's for folks that were unable to attend any of these
3 meetings. Or even if you did attend one of these meetings
4 and you have -- you wanna listen in, gain more information,
5 or you have a few comments that you wanna provide us, and you
6 wanna provide those to us orally, you will be able to do it
7 during this public scoping meeting. It'll be kind of a
8 webinar format. I'll go through this same slide presentation
9 on the webinar. And people will register to speak like they
10 did today. Then we'll have the ability to hand off the
11 microphone in cyberspace to each individual one at a time who
12 wants to speak up on the webinar.

13 We have a page here called, "Maps." And we have a
14 number of resources on there. We have the -- the maps you
15 may have seen in the back on -- on the tables. All those
16 maps for the entire project area are available on -- on that
17 page. We also have the same index maps that are on the
18 poster boards back there to help you find which map your --
19 your community is located in.

20 We also have a K -- what's called a KMZ file.
21 That works with the Google Earth software, if any of you are
22 familiar with Google Earth. If you don't have Google Earth,
23 it's a -- it's a -- there's a free version of that software,
24 and we provide the instructions on the map page on how to
25 download that software. And once you have it downloaded, or

1 if you already have it downloaded on your computer, you just
2 click on that KMZ file, and it opens up into Google Earth
3 automatically with the alignment shown of the entire project
4 area. And you can zoom right on down and you can look at
5 your house. You can look at your -- your farm fields. You
6 can look at your barns if -- if -- there's really great
7 detail on there that you can see.

8 Related links and documents. What we're gonna put
9 in there are -- are key -- key documents that we -- that
10 either we issue or that we get from the -- from the
11 applicant, meaning the applicant being the Great Lakes Basin
12 folks. So, for example, the -- the -- all the information
13 they provided will -- provided us with a bunch of information
14 on March 7th, which includes their proposed alignment, it
15 includes a narrative on how they came up with that alignment,
16 it includes a -- a spreadsheet of all the crossings, the road
17 crossings, which ones they proposed to be bridges and which
18 ones they proposed to be a grade, that's available on there
19 as well. So there's -- there's a lot of -- I think there's a
20 lot of good -- good information on there, and we'll keep that
21 updated with any new stuff as it comes in.

22 There's a place on there to add yourself to the --
23 to the project mailing list. And so if you haven't done so
24 tonight, or you know somebody that hasn't been able to end --
25 attend one of the meetings, or a neighbor, or a relative

1 that's interested and they wanna get on the mailing list,
2 they can do that. You'll have the -- we're encouraging folks
3 to request notification by e-mail because we're gonna have
4 thousands of people to notify, and it's just gonna be easier
5 and quicker for us to send out e-mails to everybody. But if
6 you have a -- a neighbor or yourself or parents -- well, I
7 guess I don't mean yourself 'cause you wouldn't be here --
8 but if you have a neighbor or parents or somebody that
9 aren't -- don't have a computer but they wanna be kept
10 informed, you're welcome to come in here, fill out their
11 information and provide their regular mail address and
12 they'll get notifications by -- by regular mail. I think
13 that's it.

14 One thing I wanted to mention. I forgot -- failed
15 to -- to stress this is that in the -- in our environmental
16 review process, we have the -- the route that has been
17 proposed by the Great Lakes Basin folks. That's just one
18 route that we're going to review in our -- in our study.
19 We're going to come up with alternative routes our self,
20 along with suggestions that you might provide us in your
21 scoping comments. And we'll likely get suggestions for
22 alternative routes from -- from agencies, federal, state,
23 and local agencies. We've already received some of those.
24 And we'll take all those and we'll identify a -- a range of
25 alternatives to study in the EIS. The ones that are -- that

1 are -- their may be some similar. Similar ones we'll kind of
2 lump in together. But we'll have a range of alternatives
3 that we'll study in the EIS, including the no-action
4 alternative. The no-action alternative is basically the --
5 the no-build scenario where this project will not move
6 forward.

7 All those alternatives, the -- the build
8 alternatives and the no-action alternative, they are treated
9 equally in our document. We don't give any preference to the
10 route that was proposed by the applicant. If there's a -- a
11 route that was proposed by another agency, or the one we came
12 up with ourselves, that's gonna be looked at in -- in equal
13 detail, equal depth as -- as the route that was proposed by
14 the applicant. We try -- we don't have any bias in that.
15 We're trying our -- our environmental review process we're --
16 we're -- we're doing it in -- in -- as best and unbiased
17 manner as we can. And that's part of the reason why we have
18 all that correspondence on our website so you guys can see
19 what we're hearing, what kinda comments we're getting, and
20 how we're replying to those comments you're hearing. You're
21 seeing what kinda questions we're asking the applicant.
22 You're -- you're reading the answers that the applicant is
23 getting back -- getting back to us. And you're seeing how
24 that's being incorporated into the environmental review
25 process. So we're trying to maintain an -- an open, unbiased

1 process.

2 That's my job. My job fortunately is not to -- to
3 make a decision on this project. It's to -- to do as best a
4 job as I can in identifying the environmental issues with
5 your help and ensuring that those issues are -- are properly
6 studied and presented in -- in the environmental impact
7 statement that we're going to be preparing.

8 So I think that was the last slide. Thanks again
9 for coming. If you -- if you don't -- I think Laura might
10 get into this, but if you don't provide us oral comments,
11 you're welcome to leave written comments with -- with us this
12 evening. If you need more time, the comment period ends on
13 June 15th. It's another couple months away. You can mail
14 those to us or you can file them with us electronically on
15 our agency website.

16 Thank you for coming tonight.

17 MS. ZIEMKE: Thanks, Dave.

18 All right. We're just gonna take a minute to
19 break this down, and we'll start the oral comment portion of
20 this meeting.

21 All right. While the stuff's breaking down, I'll
22 go ahead and go over the guidelines for the oral comment
23 portion this evening. So for those of you who did not put a
24 check mark on your card when you checked in but you would
25 like to make an oral -- an oral comment, we'll give you an

1 opportunity after we get through everyone who did put a check
2 mark on their cards. So everyone who -- who wants to make a
3 comment, you'll have that opportunity.

4 We do have a court reporter here tonight. She'll
5 be transcribing everything that's said in front of the room.
6 This will be a public document, so if you have any personal
7 information that you don't want on the public record, please
8 don't include it in your comment.

9 When you come up to give your comment, please
10 speak very clearly. State your name and spell it for the
11 court reporter. And if you're with an organization, please
12 state the name of the organization.

13 Each speaker will have three minutes to provide
14 their comment. If you have more than three minutes worth of
15 comment, I recommend you put your most important comments up
16 front, and then you'll have the opportunity to then submit
17 them in writing, the rest of your comments.

18 So this evening is about giving you the
19 opportunity to come to the front and give your oral comments.
20 We won't be taking questions and answers at this time. But
21 once we're finished with the oral comments, Dave and Phillis
22 and everyone with my staff will still be here. You're
23 welcome to come up to us and ask any questions that you might
24 have.

25 So with that -- okay. So here's -- this is the

1 way it's going to work. I'm going to call the first two
2 people forward. I'm going to have one of the individuals sit
3 over here to the side while the first person comes forward
4 and gives their oral comment. Please look this direction so
5 that the court reporter can clearly see you and hear what
6 you're saying.

7 So the first individual I have listed here is Glen
8 Minich. Glen? Okay. And if Ashley Hendrick could come
9 forward, and I'll have you just stand up here to the side.
10 Oh, thank you.

11 To help you in giving your comments, Tiffany here,
12 when you get to the 30-second mark when you have 30 seconds
13 left in your three minutes, she'll hold up this card just
14 to -- to give you a clue that you're getting close to the end
15 of your comments. If you go beyond the three minutes, I'll
16 come forward and I'll just touch you on the back of the
17 shoulder just to remind you that -- that we're finished. And
18 we ask you to please keep to the three minutes just for
19 respect for everyone else who wants to have their -- their
20 moment up here to give their comments.

21 So if you could just state your name and spell it
22 for the court reporter. Thank you.

23 MR. MINICH: I'm back. I'm Glen Minich. My last
24 name is spelled M-i-n-i-c-h. I came before you yesterday and
25 was talking about an alternative route, and I just came back

1 to clarify because I was misunderstood by a local farming
2 friend. What I had suggested was the single line rail that
3 is going east to the inter -- to the South Shore Freight Line
4 is going through a -- an environmentally sensitive -- a few
5 environmentally-sensitive areas, and it's not needed because
6 that line of -- breaks off after the connection with the CSX.
7 The misunderstanding that I had with a local farming friend
8 was that I'm not suggesting that the CS -- that a new
9 right-of-way be given to them along the -- the CSX, I'm
10 suggesting that they use the -- the existing CSX line or they
11 negotiate with CSX to drop an additional line, you know,
12 beside those lines. Because that line goes directly into the
13 KIP. The entrance is there. The rail's laid. And the
14 redevelopment commission, I believe, is currently connected
15 into the South Shore. So it does everything it needs to do
16 without going through 15 to 17 myer -- miles of, you know,
17 unbroken farmland and backyards. It's one of the heaviest
18 housed -- housing development areas where there's a lotta
19 houses right on the -- on the road frontage of 500 South, and
20 then that rail runs behind just probably at least 50 homes
21 along that route.

22 So that's the point I wanted to make. I wanted to
23 make sure that I clarified that we're not looking to switch
24 the burden to somebody else but giving them another easement
25 but to eliminate that burden by making them use the existing

1 CSA -- CSX line, which is only approximately 15 miles. Or
2 they can negotiate with them and drop a new rail on the CSX
3 right-of-way.

4 I think that's all I have to say. I -- I do
5 think -- I was thinking about it. They actually, in essence,
6 if they could do this, they could actually spend some money
7 and perhaps even make an improvement. That CSX line goes
8 through Union Mills and there are a lotta stopped trains
9 there. And it's been a big problem for the Union Mills
10 residents. And rather than spend all that money in putting
11 in 17 miles of new rail, they could perhaps do a flyover of
12 the CN in that area and maybe a road or two and allow for
13 police and fire protection to never have to stop because of
14 the -- the trains that are constantly stopped on that CSX
15 line there in Union Mills. So thank you.

16 MS. ZIEMKE: Mike Bohacek? Mike?

17 State your name and spell it.

18 MS. HEDRICK: Ashley Hedrick. Last name's
19 H-e-d-r-i-c-k. My first red flag was when I looked at the
20 current proposed route, it runs directly along my brother's
21 wetlands protection property line just on the east side of
22 Wozniak Road. It doesn't run through it, but it looks like
23 it runs directly against it.

24 Second is if they were to build it, since it is
25 privately funded, would it be federally reg -- regulated as

1 far as, you know, maintenance infrastructure. I feel like
2 Indiana can barely keep up with the infrastructure we have.
3 I feel like this would just be adding more.

4 The -- actually, in 2015 the American Lung
5 Association did -- it's been ranked regions in the country
6 for pollution, and this area is 19 on the list. And,
7 actually, in 2013 Lowell was No. 16 for a city out of the
8 whole country. I know trains are ran on diesel, and I think
9 there are alternatives for a way to at least make it better
10 as far as -- sorry -- diesel particulate filler --
11 particulate filters, anti-idling technology, low-sulfur
12 fuels, and any of that could be used on the current route in
13 Chicago. And after talking with a man that actually works
14 at the railroad already, I think that what is in place and
15 what has been in place is fine. I think it just could be
16 better managed at interchanges and -- I guess just
17 interchanges.

18 I think that's about it. Yes, that's it. Thanks.

19 MS. ZIEMKE: Thank you.

20 Darwin Simonaitis? Have a seat, yeah.

21 MR. BOHACEK: Mike Bohacek. You want me to spell
22 that for you, or you think you can sound that one out? B-,
23 as in boy, o-h-a-c-e-k. I'm a La Porte County Commissioner.
24 Some of you know, some of you may not. That being said, I've
25 had the opportunity to -- to, you know, attend a couple

1 presentations from the principal Mr. Patton about his project
2 and his -- his -- and his plans. And being a commissioner
3 for close to six years now, I've been involved in many multi,
4 you know, many industrial development programs throughout
5 the -- throughout the county. And with one that impacts this
6 many people, my concern is is that the project that is
7 described to us just last month on the 30th of March, perhaps
8 developers at times get amnesia and they forget what they
9 promised and committed early on at the start of the project.
10 So I have a copy of the meeting that I want into the record
11 as well that I'll go ahead and give to you as well. Because
12 to me it's important that as you're looking at your scoping
13 of this project, and this is -- this is a massive project.
14 You're looking at, you know, displacing people's livelihoods
15 and their lives for a very, you know, that have been around
16 for, you know, for generations. And if you're gonna do that,
17 let's make sure that what his plan is and what he's sold, you
18 know, to the county and to our redevelopment commission is
19 reality, and that's what stays and what -- what moves
20 forward.

21 Thanks.

22 MS. ZIEMKE: John McLaughlin?

23 If you could state your name and spell it?

24 MR. SIMONAITIS: Pardon?

25 MS. ZIEMKE: If you could state your name and

1 spell it?

2 MR. SIMONAITIS: Darwin Simonaitis. That's
3 S-i-m-o-n-a-i-t-i-s. Elkhart, Indiana.

4 First, I have a number of comments and maybe a
5 couple of questions. First of all, this railroad turns out
6 to be about 28 million dollars per mile. Very expensive.
7 Recent -- some recent double tracking projects have come in
8 at about 2 or 3 million dollars a mile, specifically, a CSX
9 line, the River Line Freight Line in New York state. So you
10 build double track that's 6 million dollars a mile for a
11 track, roadbed, and so forth, signaling. So what happens to
12 the other 22 million per mile.

13 Second, is there anybody considered using the old
14 DNR Central Kankakee Beltline, which originally ran from
15 South Bend, Indiana, to Northwest Illinois. Currently it's a
16 Norfolk Southern Line from Schneider, Indiana, to Hennepin,
17 Illinois. This line connected with most of the western
18 railroads in Northwest Illinois. It could -- it would
19 involve rebuilding maybe a -- a hundred miles of line --
20 abandoned line, and you could -- in fact, there have been
21 proposals to run this line, rebuild from this line to end at
22 La Porte, connect with the NS current mainline. This could
23 be done for a fraction of the cost. Of course, you'd have to
24 have NS go along with it, which may be a problem, but I think
25 it's worth investigating for a probably a fraction, maybe

1 one-tenth of the cost of the proposed railroad.

2 Why would any railroad ignore its own lines in
3 Chicago, which -- which has installed probably fairly
4 recently the PTC traffic control systems to run its trains
5 over a very expensive -- for a very expensive fee, probably
6 very expensive operation over the Great Lakes Railroad Line.

7 The CREATE program in Chicago, which the Union
8 Pacific Railroad has chosen to support, at least for the
9 moment, was created to reduce congestion, rail congestion in
10 the Chicago area. They completed a number of small projects,
11 but a really big project is the Englewood flyover, which
12 takes the Metra tracks over the Norfolk Southern tracks in
13 the Englewood district of Chicago. They've already completed
14 this, and I think that maybe a lotta this money would be
15 better spent supporting the CREATE project.

16 Also, the 15-mile line into Kingsbury I don't
17 think is necessary. There are four industries in Kingsbury
18 served by the South Shore Freight Line from the east. I
19 think they're adequately served.

20 Okay. Well, my whole life I've never been able to
21 do anything in three minutes, but I guess this time I did it.

22 MS. ZIEMKE: Thank you.

23 Harold Parker?

24 If you could state your name and spell it for the
25 record?

1 MR. McLAUGHLIN, JR.: Hello. I'm John W.
2 McLaughlin, Jr. That's because senior beat me to it. M-c,
3 capital, L-a-u-g-h-l-i-n. I will be turning 43 at April 25th
4 this year. Or I was born in '43. I'm not sure.

5 Anyway, whatever the gentleman said before me, I
6 agree with. I have to. He gave me a ride here tonight.

7 This sounds like a lotta money. I don't know if
8 anybody here remembers Everett Dirkson, senator from
9 Illinois. That's a state that away. He once said back when
10 a million dollars was a lotta money that a million dollars
11 here and a million dollars there, pretty soon you're talking
12 real money. Now, we've left the million dollar category and
13 money is more.

14 I would like to know really how this rail line
15 will function, unless it's gonna be a publicly
16 government-owned rail line. Everybody pays a user fee. At
17 one time I remember back Penn Central era. Everybody
18 remembers Penn Central, lost money every second it existed
19 from 1968 to our bi -- bicentennial year, 1976. And there
20 were a lot of rail lines up for abandonment. They've done a
21 lotta mergers since then. One of those lines is a line south
22 of Goshen on the Marion branch of the old Big Four. They
23 wanted to tear that line down. In the meantime, they put up
24 old Pennsylvania Railroad saying it was on New York Central
25 Line. Now they're putting in new rail that Norfolk Southern

1 mergers change a lotta things.

2 There's a connecting track at Porter, Indiana, --
3 or at the -- excuse me -- Butler, Indiana, connecting the old
4 New York Central to Lake Shore Michigan Southern with the
5 Wabash mainline. Things are changing all the time. They
6 tore down half the little village of Claypool to connect the
7 Nickel Plate mainline with the Marion branch of the Big Four,
8 which ran to Louisville, Louisville, and Louisville -- all
9 kinds of pronunciations -- in the commonwealth of Kentucky to
10 Benton Harbor, Michigan. That was just one line of many
11 lines the Big Four owned.

12 I really don't -- someone's gonna have to prove it
13 to me that this proposal as it stands now would be a good
14 functional system. Darwin has mentioned -- Dar -- Darwin has
15 mentioned about the existing improvements have been made like
16 at Englewood. And I'd like to see something -- Union Pacific
17 is not gonna join this proposal. CN has ways of getting
18 around. I don't know what's gonna be left that would save
19 the amount of money to justify the expenditure as presently
20 presented.

21 Thank you.

22 MS. ZIEMKE: Mark Parkhill? Mark Parkhill?

23 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Parkman.

24 MS. ZIEMKE: Oh, okay.

25 If you could state your name and spell it?

1 MR. PARKER: Harold Parker, P-a-r-k-e-r. I'm a
2 local farmer in La Porte County, and I'm glad to see this
3 brought concern in front of everybody here. We also -- so I
4 wanna share some concerns about agriculture in Northwest
5 Indiana, and that's what I'm here to tell you that La Porte
6 is the second largest county in the state of Indiana. 54
7 percent of the county is in production of agriculture.
8 Two -- approximately 2,009 -- 200,009 acres are farmed in La
9 Porte County. 139,000 of these are irrigated. 66 percent of
10 the land in La Porte County is now currently irrigated. And
11 irrigation cost anywhere from 800 to \$2,000, and an
12 additional 30,000 plus for a well, it's quite an investment.
13 And most everybody puts an irrigation out is a 30-year life,
14 so we're expecting that our grandchildren will help pay for
15 this stuff that we're -- we're sharing with 'em right now in
16 debt.

17 And what irrigation does is that we have a lotta
18 people coming here because our ground grows out anything if
19 you got water on it. We can grow tomatoes, soybeans, green
20 beans, pickles, mint, sweet corn, pumpkins. We have a
21 variety of issues and products we grow for everybody. And
22 some of these irrigations are not owned by the landowners,
23 and we're kinda concerned about who's gonna retrofit or pay
24 for irrigation projects that this thing will go through. And
25 irrigators are important product -- product for us in this

1 county 'cause it guarantees that we can give our end
2 producers -- our end users a good product in good form. And
3 if we lose that ability to irrigate, we lose a lotta money
4 in this county.

5 So -- and we're also concerned with the drainage
6 that will come with railroads and understanding all of that
7 within -- but as a farmer I'm also a business owner, father,
8 grandfather, and I know this land and over generations
9 this -- my father was a farmer and my son's a farmer, and I
10 hope my -- one of my grandchildren will be a farmer, and I
11 hate to see us always come out in these projections and see
12 great big plots of ground that are taken care maybe four,
13 five generations, well, there's nothing there, let's put a
14 railroad on it. Let's put a mill on it. Let's do
15 everything. They're not retrofitting in any of our old
16 existing things. They're just wanting to build new 'cause
17 it's easy and quick. And I think agriculture should be
18 considered a resource. A resource for our Americans, not a
19 detriment.

20 We export a lotta food around the world and -- so,
21 please, look at the impact of agriculture in Northwest
22 Indiana. The great diversity and irrigation of La Porte
23 County. The fuel your -- in your vehicles. The meals on
24 your tables might have come from this county. I wanna thank
25 you and all the farmers that care for the ground that we take

1 care of.

2 Thank you.

3 MS. ZIEMKE: David Christian? You don't want to?

4 Richard Krumbacher -- bacher.

5 MR. PARKMAN: My name's Mark Parkman,

6 P-a-r-k-m-a-n. As past president of Westville Chamber of
7 Commerce, we've always felt that the 421 corridor north of
8 Westville was one of the doors coming into our town. Right
9 now the way this train is proposed, it's either gonna go over
10 421 there or there's gonna be an overpass on 421 going over
11 the train. The ground on both sides there someday will end
12 up being general business. If you have a 100 trains going
13 through that area right now, nobody's gonna wanna put general
14 business in there. If they do, it's gonna be some kind of
15 industry, and that's not what we're looking for coming into
16 our town. To put a train track on the north side and the
17 south side of Westville was not very responsible.

18 As a member of the Westville School Board, we have
19 concerns with closing the roads down that they wanna close
20 down in Westville. What are we gonna do with our buses on a
21 dead end road picking up the kids? How about the plow trucks
22 in the wintertime? Are they gonna be responsible for putting
23 in some type a turnaround so that our buses can maneuver
24 freely? It's already a problem for us now getting everybody
25 picked up and to school on time. Every time you put in a

1 dead end road, it's just gonna make it that much harder.

2 Last thing and the most personal, I guess. My
3 address is 4052 South 1100 West. The people that I bought my
4 farm from, Gayle and Lucille Bluhm, donated over a hundred
5 acres to La Porte County. It's a wooded area for a park.
6 They wanted that woods to stay a woods, and they wanted
7 everybody in La Porte County to be able to enjoy that area.
8 You put a 100 trains a day past that, I don't know how many
9 people are gonna go out there and enjoy the area anymore.

10 We have since put a conservation easement on our
11 ground to protect the park so that no development will happen
12 in that area. It runs with the land. My question is: What
13 happens, train wants to come through there, there's a
14 recorded easement already that they can't develop that
15 ground?

16 Thank you.

17 MS. ZIEMKE: Nancy Moldenhauer?

18 MR. KRUMBACHER: My name is Richard Krumbacher.
19 Spell that K-r-u-m-b-a-c-h-e-r. Paradoxically enough, I'm
20 Shep Krumbacher's son, grandson, and great-grandson. We've
21 been living on 900 W since about the 1870's.

22 My concern in this is just a small part, and that
23 is the spur that goes to Kingsbury. As has been said
24 earlier, there really isn't enough business there at this
25 point to justify an entire new rail line connecting Kingsbury

1 with the mainline that's been proposed.

2 Secondarily, the line they proposed goes over some
3 of the old Wabash line over near Wozniak. It's my
4 understanding that line was abandoned because it was too
5 difficult to maintain through the marsh ground in that area.
6 That's just soft ground. The track was sinking. And rather
7 than repair it, they simply tore it out.

8 A much simpler and -- and more efficient method,
9 if they do need to serve Kingsbury Ordinance Plant, would be
10 to negotiate with the CSX transportation or the Canadian
11 National lines and use their right-of-way. If there comes a
12 time when there's enough business, enough traffic going to
13 Kingsbury Ordinance Plant, they could lay another line beside
14 the Canadian National. It'd be a lot shorter and avoid the
15 marsh ground that the Wabash already abandoned.

16 As a postscript, I would point out that I ride in
17 and out of Chicago every day on the South Shore. I see lines
18 and lines and lines of tank cars full of flammable oil
19 fuel -- fuel oil arriving at St. Charles Airline across the
20 south end of the Chicago Loop. Because of that, all of us
21 need to be aware that there are very powerful and wealthy
22 interests in favor of this railroad, and they will use the
23 fact of getting those tank cars out of downtown Chicago as a
24 basis for pushing this rail line. I say that just, you know,
25 that we all understand this is gonna be a long and very

1 difficult fight.

2 Thank you.

3 MS. ZIEMKE: Shelby -- Shelby Moravec?

4 MS. MOLDENHAUER: My name is Nancy Moldenhauer.
5 That's M-o-l-d-e-n-h-a-u-e-r. I'm a resident of La Porte
6 County.

7 Service transportation order representatives,
8 thank you for holding two public meetings in La Porte County.

9 This proposed Great Lakes Basin Railroad is not a
10 match for documented planned development in Lake, Porter, and
11 La Porte Counties. According to the Northwest Indiana
12 Regional Planning Commissions 2040 Comprehensive Regional
13 Plan, a Vision for Northwest Indiana, first, in order to
14 prevent suburban sprawl, business and industrial development
15 should be encouraged in the brownfields and empty factories
16 of the northern urban centers.

17 Second, in order to preserve green space and farms
18 in the counties, more, not less, undeveloped land needs to be
19 preserved and conserved.

20 Third, in order to improve transportation
21 movement, high-speed rail lines must be built in existing
22 railroad right-of-ways around Lake Michigan. A much wiser
23 use of 6 billion dollars.

24 I'm submitting to you this evening the
25 introduction, chapter 2, Transportation, and chapter 3,

1 Environment and Green Infrastructure of the "2040
2 Comprehensive Regional Plan," approved by all municipal and
3 county governments in Northwest Indiana, which supports the
4 surveys and data of these three points.

5 I'm fearful when individuals in businesses see a
6 lot of money to be made, long-term plans that have been made,
7 and a concern for quality of life for future generations are
8 not considered, laid aside, and forgotten.

9 Thank you very much.

10 MS. ZIEMKE: Steve and Nicole Barker?

11 MS. MORAVEC: My name is Shelby Moravec,
12 M-o-r-a-v-e-c. I share my neighbor's concerns about the
13 Great Lakes Basin Railroad based on safety, economics,
14 agriculture, environmental destruction, et cetera, and I'm
15 voicing my opposition as it relates to an Indiana landmark
16 located approximately 200 yards from the GLBR right-of-way.

17 Long-term residents of Indiana, my husband and I
18 moved to La Porte because we had the opportunity to purchase
19 a historic home located on Forrester Road at the eastern
20 terminus of this proposed railroad. After 18 months, we're
21 close to finishing the restoration of this 1856 home built by
22 James Forrester, who was a prominent local and state figure.
23 It's on a five-acre site surrounded by woods and farmland
24 that was part of the original Forrester land holdings. Last
25 year the home was granted Indiana -- was granted landmark

1 status by the State of Indiana and is currently in the review
2 process of being listed on the national register of historic
3 places.

4 We already experience significant vibration from
5 the existing number of rail cars. The entire house vibrates
6 enough that doors rattle against doorstops and China shakes
7 in the cupboards. When restoration began, cracks in the
8 foundation, exterior brick, and interior plaster walls were
9 apparent everywhere.

10 During the restoration process, we discovered
11 under acoustic tile one of the most unique features of this
12 historic home, original decorative hand-painted plaster
13 ceilings in four of the main rooms. According to Indiana --
14 Indiana landmarks, these ceilings are the only known examples
15 in the state of Indiana of such unique craftsmanship. Even
16 after restoration, they are extremely fragile and the
17 vibration from additional trains traveling at high speeds
18 poses a serious threat to their stability.

19 While we knew there was a railroad nearby when we
20 purchased the property, we never anticipated the arrival of a
21 railway superhighway. Diesel fumes and the constant train
22 noise from the repeated horn blasts at the crossing on
23 Forrester Road will be greatly increased by more traffic on
24 the line. We have a great concern for the long-term effect
25 that increased traffic will have on this historic landmark.

1 Additionally, the potential danger to this site by a railroad
2 accident cannot be underestimated. If a home like this is
3 irreparably damaged, La Porte will lose an irreplaceable
4 asset and part of its history.

5 Thank you.

6 MS. ZIEMKE: Mark Kurth? Mark?

7 MS. BARKER: My name's Nicole Barker, B-a-r-k-e-r.
8 I live down the street from Shelby, who just spoke.

9 I moved to La Porte County with my husband, Steve,
10 for its quality of life and to get a little bit of away from
11 the city life in the country. We selected a house near
12 Garwood's Orchard, a business that brings a lotta tourism in
13 each year. Because one of our -- our life goals is to create
14 a cheese-making operation to complement that tourist
15 attraction and enhance this community. This project would
16 pretty much put that kibosh on that dream of ours.

17 We have a lot of concerns about the project.
18 From a -- you know, I have an environmental background in
19 education. Overall, a 150 rivers and creeks are gonna be
20 crossed by the rail line, including some really high quality
21 systems, not just in Indiana but the Kishwaukee and the Lower
22 Fox and our beloved Kankakee River here in Indiana. Over a
23 100 headwater streams are going to be impacted. And these
24 are the -- the -- the sources of life where habitat is
25 created to protect water quality and all the crit -- for all

1 the critters that keep our waterways clean and healthy for
2 plants and animals and ourselves.

3 The project is also -- the piece of the Kankakee
4 River watershed is of pretty well importance to me personally
5 because it contains unrefined apple curd. And previous
6 speakers have mentioned that one of the biggest desires of
7 this railroad is to move tar sand, a local product that is
8 very concerning from an environmental prospective. And if
9 you can imagine a spill from the railcar entering our
10 waterways, many of us would lose our source of drinking water
11 permanently potentially. I just don't see our region
12 recovering from something like that.

13 Noise. Shelby's not kidding when she talks about
14 the -- the rattling of her plates in her cupboard. We're
15 about a half mile from the route. I don't sleep much. I
16 used to live in the city of Chicago. And if you can believe,
17 I have a much harder time sleeping here because of the rail
18 noise and shaking than I did in my entire 17 years in the
19 city of Chicago.

20 I think in terms of the scope of the project, I
21 really wanna emphasize that we can't just look at the short
22 term or just the footprint of the -- of the rail line. We
23 wanna know what other proposed options there are. The --
24 Frank Patton has mentioned that he wants to reserve 50 feet
25 of rail quarter for other utilities. What are those? Are --

1 are those fiberoptic cables? What kind of other businesses
2 or impacts will come as a result of what they're gonna be
3 making some profit off of that we don't know about it.

4 Lastly, the gentleman who spoke earlier referenced
5 the CREATE program in Chicago. And I lived in Chicago when
6 the CREATE program started. It is an investment that many
7 railroads and private entities, cities, states, and so forth
8 have worked tirelessly to bring together. And we would best
9 honor the need for enhanced movement of railcar communities
10 by investing this dollar amount into that project making sure
11 it -- it does what it should.

12 Thank you very much.

13 MS. ZIEMKE: John Mischke?

14 MR. KURTH: My name is Mark Kurth, K-u-r-t-h. And
15 while I share many of the concerns voiced by others tonight,
16 I -- I wanted to focus on a potential impact not directly
17 related to the railroad right-of-way itself. In fact, we're
18 getting very little detailed information about plans beyond a
19 right-of-way map. And I can look at that map to see it runs
20 about 200 yards behind my house, but I really don't know what
21 else comes along with this railroad. I see the spur line
22 going to Kingsbury. There's been some mention tonight of a
23 limited industry in Kingsbury today. So it's hard for me to
24 believe that the intent is to run a spur line out to serve
25 that limited industry.

1 I can speculate on what that might be. That might
2 be intermodal transportation hub. And if that's the case,
3 I'm curious about the additional traffic and the impact of
4 truck traffic serving the intermodal transportation hub in
5 Kingsbury.

6 Just to do a little quick math. Great Lakes
7 Railroad's talking about a 110 trains a day. And if -- if we
8 were to do a conservative estimate and say maybe 50 of those
9 would -- would offload at Kingsbury or would take on cargo at
10 Kingsbury, we're talking about 50 train -- 5100 car rail
11 trains a day. 5,000 cars a day in and outta Kingsbury. Each
12 one represents a semi truckload. That's 5,000 semis in and
13 outta the Kingsbury area. And I don't think our road
14 infrastructure, our -- our state and county roads could
15 handle that kind of additional traffic. Our roads are a mess
16 over there. The county doesn't have the money to repair it.
17 There's been no talk about who'll pay for that infrastructure
18 improvement and who pays to maintain it. And I'm concerned
19 that that's gonna fall on the county of La Porte.

20 So in addition to my concern about the quality of
21 life, I'm concerned about traffic and congestion in the area.
22 The local roads are gonna be backed up because of additional
23 surface crossings. 100 South near our home is gonna have two
24 surface crossings within a quarter of a mile of each other.
25 That's really gonna inhibit local traffic so adding 5,000

1 cars a day should inhibit travel even more, and I don't think
2 that's the kind of impact that I came to the county to --
3 to -- to -- to enjoy.

4 Thank you.

5 MS. ZIEMKE: Robert Martin?

6 State your name and spell it?

7 MR. MISCHKE: My name is John Mischke. That's
8 M-i-s-c-h-k-e.

9 So if this railroad would be the biggest rail
10 project in this country in a 105 years, since 1911, then in
11 modern times we've never seen the effects on the environment
12 and the surrounding land on a new 278-mile railroad. And we
13 know a lot more about pollutants and environmental concerns
14 than we did a 105 years ago. This could be our Chernobyl.
15 And I'm not talking about a spill. I'm talking about just
16 putting in the line.

17 There's a lotta studies out there. There's a
18 National Institute of Health study of 2010 that talks about
19 how railroads pollute. Not just diesel fumes but heavy
20 metals like mercury and other toxins that are just coming off
21 the track in railroad cars. There's a study that just came
22 out of Poland recently about how those toxins go directly
23 into plants. It's illegal in many places to use railroad
24 ties around vegetables, and there's a reason why because
25 there's carcinogens in them.

1 We need to use existing railroad lines. We have
2 plenty of them in this area, and I don't think they're
3 running at full capacity. And if you tell me that they are,
4 we just need to lay another track on the right-of-way. Those
5 tracks have been there for decades. Over a 100-plus years.
6 The farms, the wells, the water sources around those tracks
7 have had decades to adjust to that. I'm sure in the last 100
8 years there have been places where they've had bad water
9 samples. The -- the water source has been changed. There
10 have been fields where farmers have had problems producing
11 and they've changed it -- their methods or given up on 'em.
12 And over that time we may not have even known that it was
13 because of the railroads that were in place.

14 A new line makes everything around it start from
15 ground zero. And as far as the farms that are along this
16 proposed route, they're worth a lot more than 20,000 -- to
17 this proposed 20,000 breaker. These farms are like furnished
18 luxury homes on prime real estate. They have everything in
19 place. The irrigation specific to those fields. The
20 drainage. Even their equipment is tailored for that land.
21 You put in this new line, you take a wrecking ball to all of
22 that.

23 Protecting those --

24 MS. ZIEMKE: Yeah.

25 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Sorry.

1 MS. ZIEMKE: Yeah, we're -- we're not cutting you
2 off.

3 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Three more minutes.

4 MS. ZIEMKE: If you put it back up, I think it was
5 just loud. She was trying to turn it down.

6 MR. MISCHKE: Oh, okay.

7 MS. ZIEMKE: Maybe if you could pull yourself
8 down.

9 MR. MISCHKE: Is that better?

10 MS. ZIEMKE: Just pull it down a little bit.

11 MR. MISCHKE: All right.

12 MS. ZIEMKE: Okay. You're fine.

13 MR. MISCHKE: You're taking a wrecking ball to
14 those farms. Protecting those farms is a lot -- is a lot
15 more in the public interest than putting in this railroad.
16 And the big question is is this railroad is it gonna be on a
17 track that can justify building it? Is it sustainable?
18 Somebody needs to talk to more than just Great Lakes and
19 Frank Patton, because I'm hearing that the other rail
20 companies aren't even interested in using this. That more
21 people wanna get into Chicago than around Chicago.
22 The railroad industry had this surge due to tracking, but
23 it's gone downhill since, and that's not gonna change.

24 Politics aside, we're gonna be using less coal in
25 the future. We're gonna be using less -- less oil. If we

1 change nothing, just getting older cars off the road,
2 replaced with new cars with fuel efficiency, the demand for
3 oil and gas is going to go down. I -- in 50 to a 100 years
4 railroads probably won't exist. And I'm worried that the day
5 that this actually opens for traffic, if it goes in, that
6 this railroad will be outdated and obsolete from day one.

7 Thank you.

8 MS. ZIEMKE: Dennis Metheny? Dennis?

9 State your name?

10 MR. MARTIN: Robert Martin, M-a-r-t-i-n. Third
11 stenographer. This is the third time I've spoken to you.
12 You know me very well by now.

13 I -- I -- I came on behalf of my wife this
14 evening, who's not been able to come. And she said, Bob, I
15 want you to go and I want you to voice my opposition. Just
16 tell 'em the city wells are on 200 North. I never said that
17 yesterday when I told you that Valparaiso city wells are on
18 200 north without -- within a -- a mile of where this will
19 fall.

20 Also, I -- I wanted to make a point that
21 many people have said in the last three days that their
22 infrastructure's already in place, and all we need to do is
23 re -- retrofit a lot of it, which is very true. I see a
24 lotta times people trying to reinvent the wheel. I've been
25 on a school board 25 years. We fought the City of Valparaiso

1 and kept three high schools because it isn't always the best
2 way to do it the way somebody tells you to do it, okay. I
3 understand. I appreciate you folks. You're listening to the
4 public for three days. I hope you got an opportunity to see
5 the La Porte area. You saw the Porter County area, okay, of
6 the impact that it was gonna have.

7 For me, often times individuals have an idea.
8 They take it to a group of people. Hopefully, they're taking
9 it to elected officials who are responsible to the public.
10 And when the public doesn't like what they want, they get to
11 vote 'em outta office, okay. It -- it's interesting. In my
12 particular area where this railroad is talking about going
13 through, an intermodal has already bought 55 acres. Now it's
14 contingent on a lotta things. I -- I think part of the
15 contingency probably is on what your ruling is, okay. But
16 that 55 acres sits next to a mobile home park. And I'm
17 sitting there thinking, okay, do we have the public's best
18 interest in mind or has a redevelopment commission made
19 promises. That's been happening in Valparaiso often. And
20 now in Valparaiso they're paying for a new set a schools, and
21 the public are getting the tax bills for that, okay, and
22 they're shocked at what those tax bills are.

23 On the east side of Porter County, we fought
24 redevelop -- development commissions 'cause often they go to
25 organizations like yours and ask for approvals to do things

1 that in the long run cost the public, okay. Money doesn't
2 grow on trees and you guys know that. You've been in this
3 business a long time. But I encourage you to realize that
4 the points you've heard for three days are pretty sound. And
5 I believe the negatives far outweigh the positives. And so
6 if I were to do what Chris Gates did last night, which is he
7 said, -- for you to get an idea -- If everybody in here
8 that's opposed would raise one hand. But no, if you're very
9 opposed, could you raise two hands and show them who's
10 opposed to this project.

11 Okay. Thank you. Thank you for your time.

12 MR. METHENY: Yes, my name is Dennis Metheny, 6757
13 West 450 North, Michigan City, Indiana.

14 I attended a meeting on 3/30, a redevelopment
15 commission meeting in La Porte County, and I have three pages
16 of written information that I wrote down as Mr. Patton was
17 talking. And we'll start with the beginning. It's not three
18 pages. We were told by the attorney, Shaw Friedman, from the
19 redevelopment commission that he only knew about it ten days
20 before that meeting. But as Mr. Patton spoke, Mr. Patton
21 said that he'd been in La Porte County ten -- two years
22 before that. The problem a lotta people have is the truth
23 from government. We just want the truth. That's all we
24 want.

25 Also, Mr. Patton stated that federal eminent

1 domain trumps everything else. Well, we already know that.
2 But Mr. Friedman stated that years ago he wrote an eminent
3 domain for La Porte County, and now eminent domain won't be
4 used. So we're getting some conflicting interest from people
5 here.

6 Comments. One says one thing, one says the other.
7 What's the truth? That's all we want is the truth.

8 La Porte County right now is exempt from the EPA standards
9 for emissions. La Porte County -- Lake County have
10 emissions; have to have their vehicles tested. La Porte
11 County does not have to at this time. We have an exemption.

12 Now, I'm gonna go into some numbers 'cause I'm a
13 numbers guy. We were told it's gonna take a million trucks
14 off of the roads. Well, I heard a gentleman earlier say
15 5,000 trucks a day. Times 7 days is 35,000. Times a year is
16 1.8 million. So we're gonna take a million off and put
17 another 800,000 on. I've always heard figures don't lie by
18 liars figure. So I don't need that. I just want the truth.

19 A La Porte -- I heard from a commissioner La Porte
20 County must have a landfill. I'm concerned that the landfill
21 is gonna go out in the Kingsbury Industrial Park, and we
22 don't need any more garbage in here. We already got it
23 south of -- on Mount Trashmore south of Michigan City.

24 Supposed to create 35,000 jobs for every billion
25 dollars. Well, if you take 35,000, the gentleman said 8

1 billion, that's 280,000 jobs. We ain't got enough houses.
2 We better start building. Sounds like ridiculous numbers,
3 folks.

4 So we're gonna have a 110 trains a day I was told.
5 That make -- breaks down to 4 1/2 trains an hour. That
6 breaks down to 1 every 13 minutes. Do you think you're ever
7 gonna be able to cross a road?

8 So I'm just a numbers guy. And I -- I just -- I'm
9 concerned about just getting the truth, and I know you people
10 heard a lotta information from a lotta people in three days.
11 Well, I really appreciate you being here, and I thank you for
12 your time. I know I'm probably -- I probably ain't -- ain't
13 the best talker, but I do have some numbers.

14 Thank you very much. You have a good day.

15 MS. ZIEMKE: Dean Newland? Dean? You don't
16 want to, okay.

17 All right. So Dennis was the last individual we
18 had signed up to speak tonight. Is there anyone else in the
19 audience who would like to take this opportunity to share a
20 comment? Come on up. Anyone else?

21 All right. And, sir, you didn't get to chance to
22 finish. Didn't you wanna? I -- I think you were pretty
23 close, but you didn't get to finish. Would you like to
24 finish yours?

25 MR. SIMONAITIS: Okay.

1 MS. ZIEMKE: We had talked. She's coming on up.
2 Yeah, come on up. After she gets her comment, we'll go ahead
3 and finish that up. Let her go ahead and go first.

4 MS. URBANIK: He can go. He can finish.

5 MS. ZIEMKE: Okay. Go ahead. I know you were
6 close.

7 MR. SIMONAITIS: I gotta find my notes here.

8 MS. ZIEMKE: We -- we are gonna start it at the
9 three minutes again, okay?

10 MR. SIMONAITIS: Okay.

11 MS. ZIEMKE: All right.

12 MR. SIMONAITIS: Okay. I have a couple additional
13 comments here that I didn't -- I guess I didn't have time for
14 before.

15 There are a number of other intermodal and
16 industrial facilities that have been proposed in the
17 Kingsbury, New Carlisle area involving both the CSX and
18 Norfolk Southern. The facility in Manteno they're talking
19 about switching service -- switching servicing and car and
20 locomotive repair for railroad customers. I don't think such
21 a facility is required or necessary. You might have a couple
22 a tracks. You might put aside a couple of signs to break up
23 trains for delivery to connecting railroads. It's called
24 blocking. So you separate these blocks out. But I don't
25 think you need a big facility.

1 Locomotives with the service. Locomotives can run
2 hundreds of miles without any servicing. You might have some
3 inspection and fueling facility there possibly but that's
4 about it.

5 One other thing. I don't know if you're all
6 Indiana people. I'm originally -- lived in Illinois. And
7 what is Manteno most famous for in the past? The mental
8 health facility. So it was known to everybody in Illinois.
9 So I wonder if there's a connection here?

10 Okay. I think -- I think that's about it. Thank
11 you for the opportunity to finish up.

12 MS. ZIEMKE: Thank you.

13 All right. We have one more speaker. State your
14 name and spell it, please?

15 MS. URBANIK: Hello. My name is Vicki Urbanik.
16 That's V-i-c-k-i, U-r-b-a-n-i-k, and my family and I live in
17 Morgan Township, Porter County. And I did speak to you at
18 one of the previous meetings in Valparaiso.

19 I wanna focus my comments tonight on
20 sustainability of our region. Northwest Indiana, which I
21 consider to be Lake, Porter, and La Porte Counties, has an
22 extraordinary history. We have had our share of
23 environmental and economic challenges, successes, and
24 failures. The steel mills, our agriculture, the Indiana
25 Dunes, and the Kankakee River have played a key role in

1 defining who we are as a community. In my mind we need to
2 embrace actions that promote our environmental and economic
3 sustainability as a region as an important part of the
4 Chicago area.

5 And in my mind, sustainability means planning for
6 proper economic development and growth while preserving all
7 the goods things that have made our -- our community such a
8 wonderful place to live. And that includes preserving our
9 wildlife habitats and our family farms.

10 As you probably know, our Porter County
11 Commissioners have taken a unanimous action in an opposition
12 to this project. Just today, my friend, the elected Porter
13 County Assessor has come out against this project. And I can
14 tell you that the Porter County Auditor is also against this
15 project because I happen to be county auditor.

16 As you leave Indiana, I just want to ask you to
17 please remember what you heard hear in Northwest Indiana.
18 You heard a lot of emotions, a lot of fear, and in some
19 instances anger. It -- that's because we deeply care about
20 our community. We are taxpayers. We are farmers. We are
21 parents. Please don't go back to D.C. and think of us as
22 newbies. Please don't think of us as people who don't care
23 about jobs or growth. That could not be the furthest thing
24 from the truth. We came out to all of these meetings because
25 we deeply care about preserving our quality of life.

1 Many of us thinks that we can have both. We can
2 have jobs and the environment, but we have to have better
3 planning for it. For many of us, we have invested our life
4 savings in our property, our blood, sweat, and our tears, and
5 we want to preserve our quality of life, not just for us, but
6 for future generations to come.

7 Thank you so much for coming to Northwest Indiana.
8 We really deeply appreciate you listening -- that you took
9 the time to listen to all of our concerns.

10 Thank you.

11 MS. ZIEMKE: All right. Is there anyone else who
12 would like to come forward with a comment?

13 Okay. All right. So that -- that ends this
14 portion of the meeting tonight, but Dave and Phillis and
15 everyone from my staff will still be here if you have
16 questions, please keep -- there are maps and displays in the
17 back that you can look at. Please reach out to any of us if
18 you have questions.

19 Also, I wanted to make sure everyone know -- I
20 wanted to thank all of the people who did give oral comments
21 tonight. We really appreciate it. And those of you who
22 didn't, you know, please feel free to submit written
23 comments. Dave went over how you can get on our website. We
24 have comments forms at the front. And the comment period for
25 scoping is open through June 15th. And that's it.

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Thank you very much. We appreciate your coming.

(The hearing adjourned at 7:42 p.m.)

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CERTIFICATE

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I, Michelle M. Miller, a Notary Public in and for the County of La Porte and State of Indiana, do hereby certify the foregoing pages were reported by me and comprise a full, true and correct transcript of the Public Scoping Meeting for the EIS on the Great Lakes Basin Rail Line, taken April 14, 2016.



Michelle M. Miller
Notary Public, State of Indiana
Residence: La Porte County
My Commission Expires: 1-15-19

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