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City of Sidney

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City of Sidney
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April 28, 2014

Mr. David Navecky
Surface Transportation Board
CSX/L&I Environmental Assessment
395 E Street, SW
Room 1104
Washington, DC 20423

Re: STB Docket Number FD 35523, CSX Transportation, Inc. – Joint Use – Louisville and Indiana Railroad Company, Inc.: Consultation on Scope of Supplemental Environmental Assessment

Dear Mr. Navecky:

I am in receipt of your correspondence dated March 21st concerning the above-referenced matter. Thank you for requesting input from the City of Sidney.

Be advised that I have spoken to a host of local public officials including City Manager Mark Cundiff, Law Director Jeff Amick, Fire Chief Bradley Jones, and Police Chief William Balling. No one with whom I have consulted sees any adverse impact on the City of Sidney as a result of the proposed transaction, with one caveat.

The only grade crossing within the City of Sidney over which the increased traffic would pass is the Vandemark Road crossing. Vandemark Road is a heavily traveled, four-lane, interior corridor. If, for any reason, a train should come to a stop blocking that crossing, it could create significant difficulty for emergency responders.

However, that crossing has been in place since 1853. In all that time, there is no recollection that such a situation has occurred, with one exception. In 1995, an eastbound train stopped there to allow the Sidney Fire Department to extinguish a fire onboard the train and clean up the acid spill that caused the fire. Despite the fact that the crew was aware of the situation as the train crossed the state line from Indiana, they purposely stopped at that crossing knowing that there would be enough room for our fire department to extinguish the blaze, and that we had a Haz-Mat unit that could clean-up the mess.

I also took the opportunity to speak to representatives of business and industry located along Vandemark Road. The only concern was expressed by representatives of Cargill. Cargill operates a large soybean processing plant adjacent to the track. Their only concern

was that which I have already noted – that the crossing not be blocked for prolonged periods of time, as Vandemark Road is the primary delivery route for trucks bringing raw product to the plant. In the event of fire or other emergency, it would also be a route that emergency vehicles could travel on their way to the facility.

Aside from the concerns noted above, I would like to make the following observation. The north/south track from which eleven trains per day are being diverted is, in many areas, a single track. Each train has to yield the right of way several times as it travels that section of track. The east/west line has double track, alleviating the need to yield to oncoming traffic. Common sense would indicate that should dramatically improve the safety of our community.

Should you have any questions or concerns regarding this matter, do not hesitate to contact me. Again, I want to thank you for requesting local input regarding this request.

Sincerely,



Mike Barhorst
Mayor

c: City Council
M. Cundiff
J. Goubeaux
W. Balling
B. Jones
K. McMillan
M. Deitrich
file