



City of Monticello

Kenneth P. Houston
Mayor

NF
#E1-20406

RE: CSX Transportation, Inc.
Proposed Abandonment
STB Docket No. AB-55 (Sub.-No.712X)

September 17, 2013

OEA Surface Transportation Board,

Speaking as the Mayor for the City of Monticello, supporting businesses within the corporate limits of the city will always be a priority to us. With that said, I spoke to the White County Commissioners about this rail spur. In my opinion they were somewhat indifferent to its' closing, believing it was a done deal. They do have a longer history with it and said they have been expecting it for the last 10 years. I find this a little short sighted having watched Reynolds (which is located in White County) attract Magnetation LLC to invest 350 million dollars in an iron ore pellet plant based partially on rail being available(it was and is). White County Economic Development Strategy has in its plans the development of the former (Wolcott Corridor) now the Mid America Commerce Park, based on its location to rail availability and I-65. (Wolcott is also located in White County). I think these two examples alone speak volumes to what rail service can or could mean to the economic development of a town or city. Personally, I am a great proponent of rail and believe we should be expanding not eliminating.

I have spoken with Thom Timmons of Monticello Farm Service, which is the only customer being served by this line at this time. His first observation to me was that he would like to see the service continue. He said this was based on it giving him options on freight, though he admitted that this was based on only 50 or 60 cars per year. He told me that he has felt like he has been on the bubble for approximately 6 or 7 years and believed that with its closing would most likely need to seek another site. I did ask him about neighboring businesses, if any of them had talked to him or had concerns. He did say he had at one time talked about it but nothing lately. I told him, I had not heard from anyone else regarding this matter and reminded him that I had contacted him. I ask if there was anything I could do, he said if I find out anything please keep him informed. He said he would do the same for me, that he would like to fight it so that he could keep his current location.

Please excuse my narrative form but I thought it best illustrated my interpretation of this matter. I would first hate to see the City lose a business and secondly hate for the City or County to lose an opportunity for future growth and/or development because of rail not being available.

Regards

Mayor Ken Houston
City of Monticello