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# National Association of Retired and Veteran Railway Employees, Inc.

Unit 2, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

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11-4-05

Re: STB Dockets AB-6 (Sub-No. 430X) and AB-1040X

To the Surface Transportation Board of the U.S. Department of Transportation:

As retired railroaders with many years of service, we object to the abandonment of the historic, former FRISCO (now BNSF) track which is the subject of the dockets noted at the top of this page.

This abandonment effort is obviously designed to clear the way for the destruction of the Oklahoma City Union Station underpasses on both Robinson and Walker Streets by the Oklahoma Department of Transportation. As part of its plan to replace the Union Station rail yard and the underpasses with a new expressway which it can neither afford to build or maintain, ODOT is willingly sacrificing the safety of both rail crews and the driving public on these arterial city streets. It is an irresponsible and unacceptable plan to which neither the railroads nor the STB should be party.

The ODOT plan calls for the rerouting of rail traffic which has safely overpassed city streets on for 75 years to an existing freight lead at the foot of the Capital Hill neighborhood in south Oklahoma City which crosses both Robinson and Walker Streets at-grade. Plainly, the driving public "won't know what it had until it's gone," and then it will be too late.

As diesel fuel prices increase, demand for rail services is rapidly growing. This line should be seen as a prospect for traffic growth since it links St. Louis to Denver and Ft. Worth traffic at Quanah, Texas. It should not be bottlenecked or compromised in any way to make room for four miles of unnecessary urban expressway.

The direct rail access on this former-Frisco line from downtown Oklahoma City to Will Rogers

World Airport and thence to two military bases in southeastern Oklahoma is far superior to the



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The direct rail access on this former-Frisco line from downtown Oklahoma City to Will Rogers World Airport and thence to two military bases in southwestern Oklahoma is far superior to the "new route" proposed by ODOT. Oklahomans need the best possible rail service and the safest possible highway-rail grade crossings. ODOT's plan clearly compromises both in order to reduce future transportation options and increase reliance on "highways-only."

In short, the proposed abandonment is a bad idea which will not stand the light of public scrutiny. We urge the STB to reject it. If the railroads persist in the effort to abandon, public hearings should be held in Oklahoma City allowing the public to see what it will mean to them.

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*Donald Zimmerman* 3013 NW Park Place 946-9069

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*Don M Zimmerman* 3013 NW Park Place 946-9069



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Page 2, 11-4-05, Re: STB Dockets AB-6 (Sub-No. 430X) and AB-1040X, Rejecting opposed abandonment of BNSF, former Frisco, rail segment at Oklahoma City Union Station:

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