



Office of the Chairman

Surface Transportation Board
Washington, D.C. 20423-0001

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May 20, 2016
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May 19, 2016

The Honorable Joe Barton
U.S. House of Representatives
2107 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Representative Barton:

Thank you for your letter dated May 9, 2016, expressing your opposition to the proposed Texas Central Railway project. We appreciate knowing your views on this proposal.

As you may know, on April 19, 2016, the Texas Central Railroad and Infrastructure Inc. and Texas Central Railroad, LLC (collectively Applicants) filed two petitions with the Surface Transportation Board (STB or Board) seeking permission to construct and operate a high-speed passenger rail line between Dallas and Houston, Texas, and clarification of Interstate Commerce Commission precedent concerning what constitutes "construction" as related to the proposed project.¹ Because these petitions are currently pending before the Board, we cannot comment on the merits. However, in order to ensure ample time for interested parties to review the filings and prepare responses, the deadlines for reply comments have been extended. Comments addressing the Applicants' petition for clarification are now due by May 19, 2016, (an additional 10 days) and comments pertaining to the petition for exemption are now due by May 31, 2016 (an additional 22 days). Please be assured that we will give full consideration to all comments received in this proceeding.

With respect to the environmental concerns raised in your letter, please note that the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) is presently the lead agency conducting review pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act ("NEPA"). The FRA environmental review contact is Mr. Michael Johnsen, Lead Environmental Protection Specialist, FRA, 1200 New Jersey Ave. SE, MS-20, Washington, D.C. 20590. In the event that the Board finds that it has jurisdiction over the project – a threshold issue raised in Applicants' petitions – our Office of Environmental Analysis would then participate formally as a cooperating agency in the environmental review process with FRA.

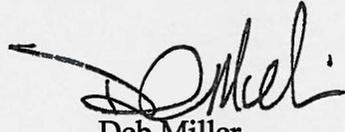
¹ STB Docket FD 36025, *Texas Central Railroad and Infrastructure, Inc. & Texas Central Railroad, LLC—Petition for Exemption—Passenger Rail Line between Dallas, TX and Houston, TX*.

Again, thank you for sharing your views on this matter with us. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions or require additional information.

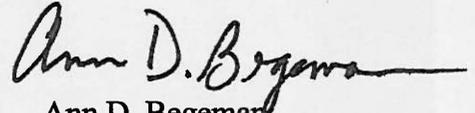
Sincerely,



Daniel R. Elliott III
Chairman



Deb Miller
Vice Chairman



Ann D. Begeman
Commissioner