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Congress of the United States
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OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

May 13, 2016

240672

The Honorable Daniel R. Elliott III
Chairman
Surface Transportation Board
395 E Street, SW
Washington, DC 20423

ENTERED
Office of Proceedings
May 13, 2016
Part of
Public Record

Dear Chairman Elliott:

Please see the attached letter from Judge Byron Ryder of Leon County, Texas. This letter expresses specific concerns regarding two petitions filed at the Surface Transportation Board (STB) regarding the Dallas Houston high speed rail project by Texas Central Partners (TCP).

I respectfully request that you consider Judge Ryder's concerns as the STB reviews and acts on the referenced TCP petitions.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

With great respect,



Bill Flores
Member of Congress

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LEON COUNTY, TEXAS

COUNTY JUDGE

BYRON RYDER

P.O. Box 429 • Centerville, TX 75833 • 903-536-2331 • 903-536-7044 fax
May 2, 2015

The Honorable Bill Flores
House of Representatives
3000 Briarcrest Drive, Ste 406
Bryan, TX 77802

Fax No. 979-703-8845

Dear Congressman Flores,

I am writing this letter to request that Congressman Flores submit a reply to the two petitions filed at the Surface and Transportation Board regarding the Dallas Houston high speed rail project by Texas Central Partners (TCP). In short, the two petitions are asking for very disturbing actions to be taken.

TCP is asking for a waiver of regulations that outline the process that is normally required. This waiver would permit TCP to condemn property that they may not need. There is a statement included in their petition filing where the CEO states TCP is aware of that and is willing to take that risk. Clearly, eminent domain was not intended to be used so carelessly.

They are also asking for a clarification of a previous case as to whether or not it would prevent them from getting a waiver of regulations granted.

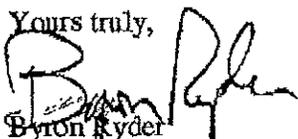
On top of this, TCP is asking for both of these decisions to be expedited, which would prevent the public from having ample opportunity to provide impact statements and considerations to the Surface and Transportation Board (STB) members prior to them ruling on the two petitions.

I am asking for his help to protect the integrity of the process that exists to ensure projects of this nature go through a sequence of steps in appropriate order with ample amount of time to consider the impact of a project of this scale.

Specifically, I am asking the Congressman to file a reply to both petitions with the STB to request the STB not grant the waiver of regulations and not grant an expedited decision on the petitions.

Please confirm that you received this email and let me know if the Congressman will submit the replies. The deadline for him to do it is May 9, 2016.

Yours truly,


Byron Ryder

Leon County Judge