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April 1, 2015

VIA E-filing

Ms. Cynthia T. Brown
Chief, Section of Administration
Office of Proceedings
Surface Transportation Board
395 E Street, S.W.
Washington, DC 20423

Re: Docket No. AB 55 (Sub-No. 726X), *CSX Transportation, Inc. - Abandonment and Discontinuance of Service Exemption - in the City of Richmond and Henrico County, VA*; and

Docket No. AB 290 (Sub-No. 303X), *Norfolk Southern Railway Company - Abandonment and Discontinuance of Service Exemption - in the City of Richmond and Henrico County, Va.*

Dear Ms. Brown:

This letter is submitted on behalf of the Virginia Department of Transportation ("VDOT") in support of the requests of CSX Transportation, Inc. ("CSXT") and Norfolk Southern Railway ("NS") that the Board vacate the Notice of Interim Trail Use ("NITU") issued in the captioned proceedings on June 6, 2013. For the reasons discussed below, VDOT requests that the Board grant the railroads' requests on an expedited basis, in order to facilitate the development of a private or state sponsored trail at this location.

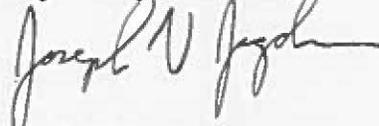
In response to the railroads' joint effort to abandon their respective interests in the 1.55 mile James River Industrial Track, VDOT submitted a request for the issuance of a NITU as to approximately .650 miles of this rail line located in Henrico County, VA. The City of Richmond submitted a request for a NITU on the remaining .950 miles of the line located within city boundaries. The two NITU requests were made for the purpose of extending the Virginia Capital Trail, a paved pedestrian and bicycle trail. In VDOT's case, the extension of the trail over the .650 mile segment in Henrico County by June 5, 2015 is critical because from

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September 19 to September 27, 2015, the Richmond metropolitan area is hosting the UCI Road World Championships bike race and the trail extension must be opened prior to that event.

As the respective filings of CSX and NS explain, despite the good faith efforts by all parties to negotiate trail use agreements that conformed with all of requirements of 16 U.S.C. §1247(d) and 49 C.F.R. §1152.29, this could not be accomplished. While this is disappointing, active discussions nevertheless continue between VDOT, the City of Richmond, and the railroads that would enable the extension of the Virginia Capital Trail outside of the NITU process once formal abandonment is consummated. Given the critical time constraints that VDOT faces to be ready for the UCI Road World Championships event in September, we respectfully request that the Board act expeditiously to vacate the NITU and thereby enable the CSXT and NS to consummate the abandonment of their respective interests in the James River Industrial Track, which will facilitate the trail's construction outside of the NITU process.

Respectfully submitted,



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VDOT Regional Staff Counsel
On behalf of the Virginia Department of
Transportation

Cc: Rachel Campbell
Director - Office of Proceedings
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