

# Call for Action: Anyone can comment on the GLB Transportation Corp., LLC project as many times as one would like

## Comments are due by June 15, 2016!



Oral comments were taken at the Federal Surface Transportation Board Scoping Meetings held April 11-21 in some communities along the proposed preferred route. It was standing room only with an average of about 350 to 400 at each of the 9 meetings. The court reporter will post all comments for public viewing at [www.stb.dot.gov](http://www.stb.dot.gov) under docket number 35952.

### Written comments may be submitted to:

Dave Navecky, Surface Transportation Board,  
ATTN Docket No. FD 35952  
395 E. Street, SW  
Washington, D.C. 201423-0001

### Electronic Comments may be submitted to: [www.stb.dot.gov](http://www.stb.dot.gov)

- Click on the "E-Filing" link
- Then click on "Environmental Comments."

### You may pose questions when writing STB comments

#### What do you need to tell STB?

Your comments to the STB are VERY important and should address concerns on any or all of the following:

**Environmental Issues:** Biological resources; water resources; including wetlands and other water of the U.S. Navigation; geology and soils; air quality; noise and vibration impacts, hazardous waste spills, aesthetics (impact on waterways considered for/ designated as wild and scenic); environmental justice; plant and animal habitat disruption.

**Impact on current transportation systems:** Bus safety; rail crossing safety; potential for increased probability of train accidents; disruption and delays of First Responders, training for First Responders, rural road closings and implications of up to 10 trains a day.

**Impact on current land use:** Impact on agricultural activities; land locked fields, increased fuel use as fields are bisected, destruction of soil a non-renewable natural resource, soil drainage and natural land contours disrupted, compactions, recreation energy resources; socioeconomics of the agricultural community; and cultural and historic resources.

Please provide specific information and data sources if applicable. To view maps of the preferred proposed GLB route go to:

<http://greatlakesbasinraileis.com/maps.html>

The STB is studying an area 30 miles in each direction from the proposed route and notes the route could be changed.

### Please share this information!

This is not just an issue threatening land owners on the proposed GLB route. The route can change. This is a bigger issue of eminent domain being used for private investor gain. This is a precedence setting case for land owner rights. Everyone needs to speak up & write comments directed to the STB.

### Now is the time to stop GLBT

If GLBT is not stopped during the approval process at Federal Surface Transportation Board Level (STB), we have to hire attorneys to protect our quality of life and land owner rights. Taking a stand now could prevent expensive litigation in the future.

## What's this I am hearing about a railroad being build through my community?

*Great Lake Basin Transportation Corp., LLC* is a proposed private enterprise. It would include a rail line with 278 miles of easements at least 200 ft. wide and perhaps 250 ft. wide. This would take over 6,000 acres of private land from the rightful owners.

The person representing *Great Lake Basin* is Frank Patton. He was a software salesman for the banking industry for many years and now claims he wants to leave a legacy of a rail project that would run from Milton, WI to south of Michigan City, IN — skirting the congested and populated areas in the Chicago region.

He claims the proposed \$8 billion rail line will create a freight bypass around Chicago, yet he has no experience with railroads and has not revealed his investors other than stating that he has some foreign interest.

GLB has asserted that it could take property through quick-take eminent domain, yet legal experts have

advised that in order for GLB to use quick-take the General Assembly would have to amend the law to allow it. GLB is registered as transportation concern and not a railroad.

GLB has also announced 50 feet of the right-of-way would be for pipelines and utility lines. This has raised major legal questions as to whether a project can take easements and then profit from leasing or selling sub-easements.

Investors in the project claim it would be the "largest railroad project in 125 years", though Illinois Farm Bureau Senior Counsel, Laura Harmon points out, "None of the railroads have publically supported the proposed project".

Who would pay to use the proposed railroad and what would happen if the private venture went bankrupt? There is no reclamation plan or bonding in place or in Patton's proposal.

## Is there a need for this project?

According to the *Chicago Tribune* in the Monday March 21st 2016 paper, *Union Pacific* issued the following statement: "After carefully reviewing the proposal, *Union Pacific* determined in July 2014 that it was not interested in moving forward with a discussion on the *Great Lakes Basin Railroad bypass project*. We have repeatedly communicated this position to *Great Lakes Basin leadership team*."

*Union Pacific* spokeswoman Calli Hite states:

*Union Pacific is focused on several major public-private partnerships, including CREATE, which will benefit the region and enhance efficiency for Chicago-area and regional railroad operations. "CREATE", or the "Chicago Region Environmental and Transportation Efficiency" program, is a partnership between the U.S. Department of Transportation, the state of Illinois, the city of Chicago, Metra, Amtrak and the nation's freight railroads to improve rail line efficiency.*

## Can GLBT take my land for this railroad? Can they force me to sell my land?

According to Dave Navecky, spokesperson for the Environmental Scope Hearings, Surface Transportation Board, if this railroad proposal is approved, GLBT will be able to use FEDERAL eminent domain laws. This will circumvent any and all state and local planning, procedures, rules, regulations, ordinances, and laws. If approved, lawyers will have to be hired for legal action in Federal Court. Stopping GLBT will become difficult and costly.

Federal eminent domain laws allow private for-profit entities like *Great Lakes Basin Transportation, LLC*, to condemn land as if they were public agency acting for the public good. GLBT would have to purchase property, but owners must sell. GLBT, by law, must pay *market value* which is an average of current assessments. GLBT, under federal law, will not be allowed to pay any more than this *market value*. GLBT cannot pay \$20,000 per acre for farmland as Frank Patton constantly misstates. STB knows this too.