

BEFORE THE
SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BOARD

Finance Docket No. 36025

TEXAS CENTRAL RAILROAD AND INFRASTRUCTURE, INC. &
TEXAS CENTRAL RAILROAD, LLC
-AUTHORITY TO CONSTRUCT AND OPERATE-
PASSENGER RAIL LINE BETWEEN DALLAS, TX AND HOUSTON, TX

VERIFIED STATEMENT IN SUPPORT OF **TEXANS AGAINST HIGH SPEED RAIL'S** REPLY TO
PETITIONERS' PETITION TO REOPEN

The Texas and Southwestern Cattle Raisers Association (TSCRA) is a 141-year-old trade association and is the largest and oldest livestock organization based in Texas. TSCRA has a membership of more than 17,500 beef cattle operations, ranching families and businesses. These members represent over 55,000 individuals directly involved in ranching and beef production who manage over 4 million head of cattle on more than 76 million acres of range and pasture land primarily in Texas, Oklahoma and throughout the Southwest.

A great number of cattle raisers and landowners will be negatively affected by the 240-mile-long high-speed rail line (Project) proposed by Texas Central Railroad and Infrastructure, Inc. and Texas Central Railroad, LLC. (Texas Central). We are aware that Texas Central has filed a Petition to Reopen these proceedings in which it asks the Surface Transportation Board (Board) to take jurisdiction over the Project and to reconsider its Petition for Exemption filed in 2016.

TSCRA opposes Texas Central's Petition for Exemption. Texas Central continues to provide conflicting information to the public and refuses to release essential information on the

projects viability. As such, we do not believe the Board has sufficient information to make an informed decision at this time.

Specifically, Texas Central representatives have made claims of their intent to work with property owners along the path of the project to address their concerns. Despite this, we regularly hear from property owners along the path of the Project who complain of Texas Central's lack of transparency. Further, as evident by this petition, Texas Central continues to work surreptitiously to obtain exemptions that will allow them to circumvent the wishes of the very property owners they claim to seek agreement with. TSCRA strongly opposes the use of eminent domain for this project. Texas property owners should not be forced to bear the financial, environmental and quality of life burdens of a project that is clearly not in the public interest. Texas Central's contract with Amtrak does not connect the Project to the interstate rail network. It is a closed system, and therefore, should be left to the State of Texas to regulate.

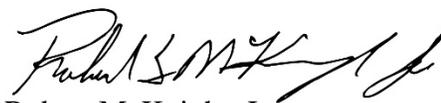
We also question how this Project can be built, considering Texas Central's constantly changing cost numbers. It first told the Board the Project would cost \$10 billion to construct, but that number has already risen to \$18 billion. Texas Central also has promised the Project will be privately funded but admitted under oath that it has secured less than 1% of the financing it needs for the Project. Also, Texas Central will not disclose its business plan or any financial information. Texas Central has also admitted that it will aggressively seek federal funds. Given what has happened in California with its Project, the Board must require that Texas Central release all financials and related information to ensure that Texas does not end up with a half-built train.

Texas Central has also increased its ridership projections from what it initially told the Board even though Texas Central refuses to release the "studies" that allegedly support these

projections. Texas Central also refuses to substantiate data on their claim that the Project will generate billions of dollars for the Texas economy. Texas Central should be required to fully disclose all information regarding the Project, given that it will negatively impact Texas communities and disrupt the peace and enjoyment of thousands of Texans' private property.

If the Board exempts Texas Central from filing a full application, the Board will be guilty of failing to protect the public interest. The Board must take a hard look at the Project. Full disclosure should be required, full discovery should be allowed, and the final Environmental Impact Statement should first be completed. The public must have adequate time to comment after all information is disclosed. Only then will the Board be in a position to make an informed decision. Texas Central has not been transparent at any point of this process, so in turn, we are relying on the Board to stop Texas Central's continuing efforts to hide information from the Texans whose lives and communities will be permanently affected by this Project.

I declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct. Further, I certify that I am qualified and authorized to file this statement. Executed on May 29, 2018.



Robert McKnight, Jr.
President
Texas and Southwestern Cattle Raisers Association