

Mainiero, Phil

From: jerry weiss <jerrynweiss@hotmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, February 02, 2017 9:50 PM
To: tratestimony
Subject: copy of my email to necfuture.com

I am writing to oppose the inclusion of the Kenyon to Old Saybrook Bypass in NEC Future planning. I am also writing to object to the limited notice, and opportunity to comment on the plan. I first learned about plans for a Kenyon to Old Saybrook Bypass late in the summer of 2016.

The Federal Railroad Administration has failed to demonstrate to the public a compelling need for a Kenyon to Old Saybrook Bypass. There is also mounting evidence that the Federal Railroad Administration failed to comply with either the spirit or the letter of the law, by selecting the Kenyon to Old Saybrook Bypass as part of the Final Environmental Impact Statement (F-EIS) prior to public comment, on or before, November 15, 2015.

Having attended the public forum in Old Lyme this summer, I was struck by the unanimous resistance to this plan from both private citizens and elected officials at the local, state and national level. In retrospect, I'm further disappointed by and distrustful of the FRA's lack of transparency; at that meeting there was a willingness to give the impression that the public was being heard, and that the Bypass would not be recommended.

Whether proposed as above ground or as a tunnel, the Kenyon to Old Saybrook Bypass poses intolerable and unsustainable impacts to the dense historic and environmental resources which define both Southeastern Connecticut and Southwestern Rhode Island. As a longtime resident of Southeastern Connecticut, I'm familiar with the artistic, cultural and environmental importance of the Old Lyme area, which the Bypass would effectively destroy. I'm aware that mere discussion of the Bypass is already having a profound impact on property values in this area. I can only echo the sentiments of Senator Blumenthal, who has referred to this plan on multiple occasions as "harebrained." I look forward to joining the thousands of residents of Connecticut and Rhode Island who will oppose this passionately, until the proposal is withdrawn.

Given the importance of the Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (P-EIS) for the future of the Northeast Corridor, a 60-day extension of the deadline for public comment from January 31, 2017 to April 1, 2017, is not only in the public interest, but has clear precedent. Indeed, a similar extension was granted to review much less extensive plans for the "All Aboard Florida" high speed rail planning initiative in Florida. The Federal Railroad Administration has enjoyed flexible deadlines throughout the planning process, surely, the public deserves an equivalent opportunity to provide informed and meaningful comment before this critical document is finalized.

Sincerely,

Jerry Weiss

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Sent from Mail for Windows 10