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January 28, 2008

Burlington Northern Santa Fe
State Department of Transportation
Docket No. TR-070696

To whom it may concern:

This letter is in regards to the proposed closure of the Hickox Road crossing by the State Department of Transportation and the Burlington Northern Santa Fe. The closure of this crossing would have adverse affects that I will speak to in this letter.

A detrimental affect this crossing closure would have is response time for emergency vehicles. If emergency vehicles must use the Blackburn Road access to accommodate people in the flats southwest of Mount Vernon it will increase response times as well as increase traffic congestion in the Blackburn Road area.

Assuming the availability of service at Blackburn Road for diverting traffic from Hickox Road does not account for growth of Blackburn Road traffic. In addition, the City of Mount Vernon is already anticipating directing a substantial amount of the growth in south Mount Vernon to t Blackburn Road. All of this increased traffic will have a definite affect on the safety of the community and the transportation system.

If the Burlington Northern Santa Fe and the State Department of Transportation insist on closing the crossing at Hickox Road, the Burlington Northern Santa Fe should be required to be included in the impact costs of mitigating traffic which will be re-routed.

The City of Mount Vernon has recently completed an exhaustive traffic study of the city and in particular the Blackburn Road area. These studies and model are much more current than the traffic studies that were done by the Burlington Northern Santa Fe and should be considered before finalizing this decision.

I trust that you will see validity in the points made and hope you will consider the safety and traffic concerns and re-evaluate your position on this matter.

Respectfully yours,

Joe Woodmansee

Joe Woodmansee, Owner
Woodmansee Construction, Inc.

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