

October 30, 2008

Utilities and Transportation Commission  
PO Box 47250  
Olympia, WA 98504-7250

RE: Proposed closure of the Logen Road rail crossing

Dear UTC Members and Local Community Members,

I apologize that I am not able to be here in person tonight. I would like to share my support for the proposed closure of the Logen Road rail crossing, as this closure will allow the Stanwood Siding Extension project to continue. This rail siding extension project is essential to ensuring that Amtrak *Cascades* passenger trains will be allowed to service the Stanwood Amtrak Station, which is scheduled to be complete in Spring of 2009.

Amtrak *Cascades* passenger rail services operates over the private infrastructure of the Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) railway company. In order for relatively fast passenger trains to share tracks with much slower freight trains operated by BNSF, the rail system must include adequate sidings. Sidings allow the slower freight trains to move off of the mainline while a faster passenger train proceeds.

BNSF has agreed to allow the state to construct a passenger rail station at Stanwood. However, to mitigate the impact on BNSF's freight shipping business, the existing Stanwood siding must be extended to accommodate the length of a modern freight train. BNSF has indicated that before a passenger train will be allowed to stop at, or service, the Stanwood Station, the Stanwood Siding Extension project must be complete. The closure of the rail crossing at Logen Road is required in order for the Stanwood Siding Extension to be completed. So the closure of the rail crossing at Logen Road is, therefore, a prerequisite to Amtrak *Cascades* passenger rail service at the Stanwood Station.

The railroad has offered \$50,000 to offset inconveniences caused by the closure of Logen Road, including a cul-de-sac on the east side of rail tracks. This will allow emergency vehicles to turn around at this location and hopefully alleviate the concerns

of the affected property owners about access to emergency services. I am pleased that the community and BNSF have agreed to a resolution of the community's emergency response concerns.

As the Senator for this area, I can certainly understand the inconvenience to property owners who will need to use alternate crossings once the Logen Road crossing is closed. However, I am optimistic that these affected property owners will be able to work with their neighbors and the City of Stanwood to address their concerns so that the Stanwood Siding Extension project can be completed, which will in turn allow for passenger rail service to begin at Stanwood's Amtrak station.

Sincerely,

Mary Margaret Haugen  
State Senator, 10<sup>th</sup> Legislative District