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Robert E. Martinez
Vice President
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July 16, 2009

Dr. Phil Hammonds
Superintendent
Jefferson County Board of Education
2100 18th Street South
Birmingham, AL 35209

Dear Superintendent Hammonds:

Thank you for your request for more information about Norfolk Southern's Birmingham Regional Intermodal Facility planned for McCalla, and specifically its potential effects on the McAdory Elementary School.

The Birmingham Regional Intermodal Facility (BRIMF) will be part of the multi-state Crescent Corridor initiative to establish highway competitive intermodal rail freight routes between the South and the Northeast. Intermodal transportation utilizes two or more modes of transportation -- rail, truck and/or ship -- to move freight in containers and trailers. At the BRIMF, cranes will transfer the containers and trailers between trucks and trains; freight will not be removed from the containers and trailers at the facility, which is to say, that as a course of business, the containers and trailers are not opened at the facility.

Intermodal is the safest, most efficient and economical way to move freight. A single train can haul 280 or more truckloads of freight and move a ton of freight 436 miles on one gallon of fuel. Electronics, mail, food, toys, paper products, clothes, appliances, textiles, and auto parts are typical of the commodities that move on intermodal trains. Only a small percentage (3% to 4%) of the shipments in Norfolk Southern intermodal service are regulated hazardous commodities, which are products such as lubricants, paints, resins, and corrosives. Certain classes of hazardous commodities that pose a high risk, such as toxic inhalation hazards (chlorine for example), asbestos, and radioactive materials, are completely prohibited in Norfolk Southern intermodal service. Such highly hazardous do not move at all on our intermodal network.

The McCalla site for the BRIMF was chosen after a careful and exhaustive search. Norfolk Southern employs extensive site selection criteria for intermodal terminals. A facility site must be adjacent to the rail mainline, and preferably contiguous for head-in and head-out moves by trains, and on flat or gently rolling land and with convenient access to major highways. The adjacent mainline should have minimal or no highway grade crossings. Wetland and other environmental effects are also considered in the design and construction of an intermodal facility, Norfolk Southern utilizes the best engineering practices to limit environmental impacts. A specific criterion for the BRIMF was a site located on the Norfolk Southern mainline leading to Meridian and New Orleans. The McCalla site's location near an existing industrial park is also a plus.

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In regards specifically to the McAdory Elementary School, the portion of the facility nearest the school will be an internal road, approximately 220 ft away. An existing tree line will remain between the facility and the school visually to shield the facility from the school. In addition, the facility will incorporate a landscaped berm and buffer on Norfolk Southern property. We know noise is also a concern, and though the landscaped berm will also dampen noise from the facility, we will work with our consultants to more accurately determine the actual noise impact on the school. We will thoroughly review the results of the noise study and will adjust our buffers as necessary. I should note that intermodal operating activity moves around the facility so that any noise close to the school will only be intermittent.

The BRIMF will also have fencing around its entire perimeter in addition to any fencing the school already has. As required by U.S. Department of Homeland Security regulations, access to the facility will be tightly controlled. Only truck drivers that are registered and in good standing with Norfolk Southern will be allowed to deliver or retrieve shipments. The Norfolk Southern Police Department will also monitor the facility and maintain an appropriate presence. Vehicle speed limits within the facility will be no higher than 20 mph.

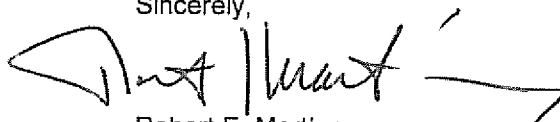
Although, it may not be a special concern for the school, we will also reduce the effects of facility lighting spillover by using fixtures that direct the light directly downward. Additionally, Norfolk Southern has undertaken a project to reduce lighting to the minimum required for safe operation to reduce our overall energy consumption.

One of the benefits of the McCalla site is that we are able to channel truck traffic directly onto McAshan Drive and avoid any use of Eastern Valley Road. There will be no facility truck-related use of Eastern Valley Road. This avoids facility trucks passing by the school or residential neighborhoods. Much of the terminal will be shielded from Eastern Valley Road by the natural ridgeline, but landscaped berms will also shield the facility from the general public.

As a major transportation provider throughout the South, Norfolk Southern takes seriously its role as a corporate citizen. The safety of the communities we operate through, the general public, and our employees is of paramount concern. In fact, Norfolk Southern is an industry leader in workplace safety, as evidenced by our being awarded the rail industry's coveted E.H. Harriman Gold safety award for 20 consecutive years, a record which is beyond unprecedented. Furthermore, we are committed to protecting the environment, and we will comply fully with laws and regulations to address environmental health and safety.

In closing, please be advised that Norfolk Southern will host a public information session related to the BRIMF on August 18. In addition, I invite you to visit our intermodal facility in Austell, Georgia, near Atlanta. Although considerably larger than what the BRIMF will be, it will give you a good feel for what an intermodal facility looks and sounds like.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robert E. Martinez", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Robert E. Martinez