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40 Witnesses to Testify at CSX Hearing Today

The DC City Council will convene an unusual summer hearing on Tuesday to hear testimony from some 40 witnesses on the CSX proposal to rebuild and expand its Virginia Avenue Tunnel in southeast. Residents, some living within a few feet of the planned massive construction site and strongly against CSX's proposal, are on the witness list, along with representatives from CSX, a \$30 billion transportation company, and from the District Department of Transportation, the local agency that shares authority over the project with the Federal Highway Administration/U.S. Department of Transportation.

What: Joint hearing on CSX Tunnel in front of Council Chairman Phil Mendelson, Ward 3 Councilmember Mary Cheh, of the Committee of the Whole and the Committee on Transportation and the Environment, respectively

When: Noon, Tuesday, August 26; DCSafeRail witnesses available at 11:30 am and throughout hearing

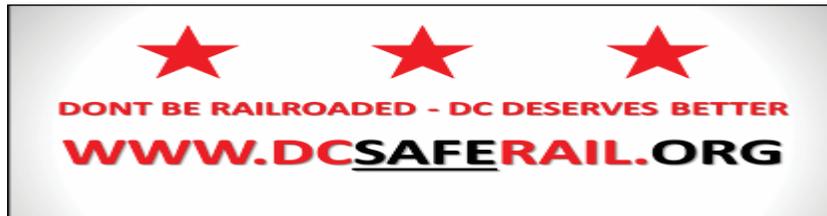
Where: Council Chamber, Wilson Building, 1350 Pennsylvania Ave., NW

Differing testimony is expected on the following:

- 1) that the tunnel has "decades" of use, per the federal Environmental Impact Statement, contrary to CSX's contention that the "tunnel...is near the end of its useful life..."
- 2) the safety of continued and expanded shipment of hazardous materials through the District, very close to the U.S. Capitol, including Bakken crude oil.
- 3) preapproval before the EIS analysis started of a vital public right-of-way in perpetuity for \$10, for CSX.
- 4) the crowding out of planned expansion of commuter and passenger service, vital to reduce auto commuting and air pollution, by the increased freight traffic through the expanded tunnel.
- 5) a \$4 million payment from CSX to DDOT, that, it appears, was returned to CSX and then handed back to DDOT, apparently to pay for a small redesign of the just-finished 11th St Bridge.

DCSafeRail is asking that no decision be made on the EIS until all these and other questions are fully evaluated in the DC Council's comprehensive rail study that is just getting under way.

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DCSR is a coalition of citizens, organizations, and elected officials asking for accountability and oversight in ensuring the community's health, safety, and security in the Virginia Avenue Tunnel expansion project.



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