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Council Asked to Act in CSX Tunnel Controversy *Hearing Resumes This Morning*

DCSafeRail has asked the DC Council to prevent further action by DDOT to approve the proposed CSX tunnel expansion until after the Council completes the District Rail Plan and the plan's holistic and objective analysis and recommendations are made part of a new environmental review. DCSafeRail made the request in a letter to Council Chairman Phil Mendelson and Councilmember Mary Cheh, in anticipation of the resumption on Monday of the August 26 hearing about the proposed CSX expansion. Chairman Mendelson put that hearing into recess because the lone DDOT witness did not answer many of the questions posed by councilmembers.

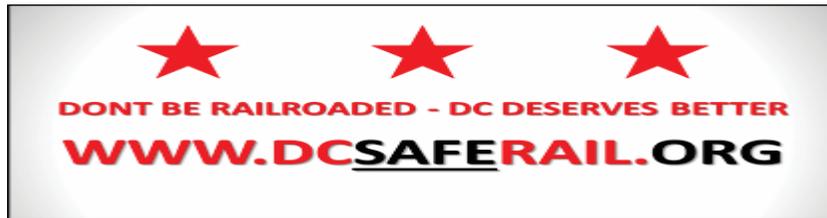
"We look forward to hard questions for DDOT from Chairman Mendelson, Councilmember Cheh, and other council members as to why this project seems to be on the fast-track to approval when there are so many unanswered questions, and when the entire environmental review was tainted by DDOT's pre-approvals," said DCSafeRail member Rebecca Sohmer. "Maryland's rejection last week of the proposed CSX expansion in Baltimore shows that communities and their political leaders can stand up to being railroaded by CSX. These projects can be rejected, at least unless and until they pass muster after reevaluation with professional objectivity and all of the facts."

The letter lists the following problems with the current CSX Tunnel proposal: (i) the grave public health and safety risks it poses; (ii) the detrimental impact it will have on passenger and commuter rail in the District; (iii) DDOT's pre-approval of the project before any environmental review had been conducted; (iv) lack of authority to expand the right of way for CSX; and (v) the lack of a meaningful mitigation and benefits package for residents and the District as a whole.

Continuation of DC Council Hearing on CSX Tunnel

When: TODAY, September 8th, 2014
Where: Wilson Building, 1350 Pennsylvania Ave., NW
Time: 10:00am

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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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