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To Whom It May Concern:

Please scope the impacts on student learning, as created by health problems from noise pollution caused by increased rail traffic from the proposed Longview Terminal. As an educator and parent, I am very concerned about the additional rail traffic, both proximity to family homes and schools, existing tracks and proposed 'new' tracks in the county and state. Many of the children I work with have learning disabilities, health impairments, mental health issues and asthma. I want to know what noise pollution, as related to student learning, will have on my child and all children in the communities along the proposed or foreseeable rail routes between the Powder River Basin and Washington Coast. I believe that school district leaders, educators, families, and students should know what risks the increased rail traffic has on student learning and student ability to meet state testing standards, both students' already at-risk and otherwise 'healthy' students. I believe it is imperative to know how additional exposure to noise pollution will effect education. This study should be comprehensive in range from the first year through to when the trains and terminal(s) is in full operation; year 5, year 20, etc.

The following areas of research are important to consider:

1. Potential Noise exposure impacts, as compiled by Whatcom Docs, such as cardiovascular disease, including increased blood pressure, arrhythmia, stroke, and ischemic heart disease; cognitive impairment in children; sleep disturbance and resultant fatigue, hypertension, arrhythmia, and increased rate of accidents and injuries; exacerbation of mental health disorders such as depression, stress and anxiety, and psychosis.

Reference: Statement of the Whatcom Docs organization  
(<http://www.coaltrainfacts.org/whatcom-docs-positionstatement-and-appendices>) and referenced research.

2. Researched data from medical, educational, and scientific sources. Potential effects on student learning due to noise pollution. "Noise is defined as unwanted sound. Environmental noise consists of all the unwanted sounds in our communities except that which originates in the workplace. Environmental noise pollution, a form of air pollution, is a threat to health and well-being. It is more severe and widespread than ever before, and it will continue to increase in magnitude and severity because of population growth, urbanization, and the associated growth in the use of increasingly powerful, varied, and highly mobile sources of noise. It will also continue to grow because of sustained growth in highway, **rail**, and air traffic, which remain major sources of environmental noise. The potential health effects of noise pollution are numerous, pervasive, persistent, and medically and socially significant. Noise produces direct and cumulative adverse effects

that impair health and that degrade residential, social, working, and learning environments with corresponding real (economic) and intangible (well-being) losses. It interferes with sleep, concentration, communication, and recreation. The aim of enlightened governmental controls should be to protect citizens from the adverse effects of airborne pollution, including those produced by noise. People have the right to choose the nature of their acoustical environment; it should not be imposed by others.

[http://journals.lww.com/smajournalonline/Abstract/2007/03000/Noise\\_Pollution\\_A\\_Modern\\_Plague.16.aspx](http://journals.lww.com/smajournalonline/Abstract/2007/03000/Noise_Pollution_A_Modern_Plague.16.aspx)

I would ask that you review and include in your scope known studies, collected and existing data from all school districts along the route and conduct additional studies as needed to quantify impacts with certainty.

Because of the large numbers of children exposed along all rail corridors, the cumulative increase in rail traffic will have a significant impact on human health. The Environmental Impact Statement must include not only coal transport, but also the impacts from all other freight and passenger trains both now and in the foreseeable future. Please include in this scope all anticipated increases in rail traffic, including any increase from the expansion of the Westshore and Ridley Terminals in B.C., GPT, Longview, etc. The education and future of our children deserves an in depth study.

The EIS should measure the cost of increased school services to meet student learning needs due to missed school days, mental health and counseling issues, increased school health and nursing needs, remedial programs, and testing needs. The EIS should measure a dollar equivalent for these services with direct and indirect costs. The EIS should measure the loss to school districts in Whatcom County and Washington State, due to families who will be unwilling or unable to move to school districts/or move out of school districts due to the perception of being located in a injurious area due to rail traffic. The EIS should also measure the costs to school districts for the increase cost for inability to meet national and state testing standards. All relevant incurred costs should be reviewed with an allocated dollar amount for future mitigation paid for by the applicant.

Potential mitigations for the preceding concerns might include, increasing funding for school districts to meet student needs due to lost school days and decreased test scores, relocating families along the rail corridor to less injurious localities, and creating sound buffers along the rail tracks near all schools and family homes.

Viable alternatives to a coal terminal, which in turn increases rail traffic, could be energy production based on energy independent technologies such as windmill farms, geothermal, and or solar energy plants on the industrial land with the intention of clean renewable jobs with revenue and no health risks. Other non toxic industries involving producing local products and local distribution would have a far greater benefit to the community and economic development of Longview than a coal terminal.

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