

OCT 21 1999

I am Sheri Stewart and this is my baby boy, Tendal. We live in the wonderful neighborhood of Lake Claire in a co-housing community directly across from the train tracks on Dekalb Ave. From Tendal's window in his room, he watches the trains go by. During the 14 months of his life he has grown to love trains. Although he doesn't speak much yet, he has a sign he makes with his hand that means he hears a train and we'll run up to his room and look out at it pass.

1... [] I don't have the heart to tell him that the trains he loves so much may be carrying things that could shorten his life or even kill him. A photo was taken a few years back of a cask sitting on the track right next to our house. It sat there for several hours. There was no security protecting it. A radiation reading taken nearby showed a level of 10 background. The levels of radiation that Tendal and I would be exposed to would have a significant impact on the total amount of radiation we would be exposed to over the course of our lives. Even if an accident weren't to happen, our lives would be shortened. [] We are here representing the other 12 families of our co-housing community, hundreds of others in our neighborhood, and thousands of others in the Atlanta area who live along the tracks and cannot be here today. There are 2 schools near us which are also directly next to the tracks.

2... [] We say that you have no right to put our lives in danger like this. Our government is supposed to be by the people and for the people, not by industry and big business and for industry and big business. The People do not want these casks being transported by our homes. []

Search your hearts. What if Tendal and I were your son or daughter or grandchild? Would you really want these trains passing by our homes? If you are honest with yourselves, the answer will be no. If it's not good enough for your family, it's not good enough for any other citizen, not for any other human being. Imagine how you would feel one day -- maybe years from now, after you've retired, if you woke up one morning, turned on the news and heard about a train accident in Georgia in which radioactive material has leaked, neighborhoods have been evacuated, and people have been hospitalized from exposure. You would remember my face and Tendal's and wonder if we were some of the people. How will you sleep with a clear conscience if you allow these casks to pass?

Don't put yourselves in the position of having to sit in front of a legislative hearing or jury of citizens years from now having to justify why this decision was made when you knew the risks were high.

2 cont.

It is unethical to make this decision which bows to industry at the risk of human safety. I know you are all ethical people. Use your positions to make sure this mistake is avoided. Use your positions to make sure that you and we can sleep well at night knowing that you've put our lives above industry interest.

Use your power to let Tendal love trains without having to fear them.

Thank you.