

RAIL CUSTOMER COALITION

May 12, 2022

The Honorable Donald Payne, Jr.
Chair
House Committee on Transportation & Infrastructure
Subcommittee on Railroads, Pipelines and Hazardous Materials
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Rick Crawford
Ranking Member
House Committee on Transportation & Infrastructure
Subcommittee on Railroads, Pipelines and Hazardous Materials
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

RE: Hearing on Surface Transportation Board Reauthorization

Dear Chairman Payne and Ranking Member Crawford:

We are writing to you on behalf of the Rail Customer Coalition (RCC) regarding an urgent matter that is negatively impacting every part of the U.S. economy – from food to fuel. The RCC is a large collection of trade associations representing a broad cross-section of manufacturing, agricultural, and energy industries that depend on the railroads to deliver reliable and affordable service. The coalition represents some of the nation's largest customers of freight rail service both by volume and revenue.

Over the past few months at hearings held by Congress and the Surface Transportation Board (STB), our members have detailed how growing freight rail service problems are harming their operations across the country. If left unresolved, rail service failures will further drive inflation and contribute to supply chain disruptions for food, energy, and manufactured goods.

We submit this letter for the record in support of the STB having the necessary authority and resources to continue to ensure there is a competitive and reliable freight rail network that meets the needs of its users.

As you know, the Board plays a vital role in resolving freight rail issues and ensuring that goods can efficiently and affordably be shipped by rail. We support the Board's mission and encourage its reauthorization to include sensible reforms that will benefit both shippers and railroads.

Members of the RCC have expressed support for several reforms they would like to see enacted at the subcommittee hearing examining "Stakeholder Views on Surface Transportation Board Reauthorization." Many of those same recommendations were echoed at the STB's recent hearing on "Urgent Issues in Freight Rail Service." These reforms will help address the issues that shippers are facing by increasing access to competitive freight rail service, creating better service metrics, providing accountability for service failures, and allowing the Board to operate more effectively.

We thank the members of this committee for their attention to resolving freight rail issues, and we look forward to collaborating with you on advancing much-needed policy reforms that will help keep our economy moving.

Sincerely,

The Rail Customer Coalition