

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-3203

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March 31, 2020

Surface Transportation Board
395 E Street SW
Washington, DC 20423

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Dear Members of the Surface Transportation Board:

I write in regards to the Bessemer and Lake Erie Railroad Company's (B&LE) application to acquire certain rail lines from CSX Transportation, Inc. (CSXT) located in New York (U.S. Massena Lines). This line is a vital transportation link that connects businesses and farmers in Central and Northern New York – from Oswego and Syracuse to Watertown, Ogdensburg and Massena – to vital markets in both Canada, via Montreal, and the US, via connections in Syracuse. While reviewing this application, I urge to you address the concerns of New York stakeholders and ensure services, rates and routing throughout the state remain competitive.

B&LE proposes to acquire 278.1 miles of rail lines located in Onondaga, Oswego, Jefferson, Saint Lawrence and Franklin Counties. The route serves as a critical piece of New York State's transportation network and a major contributor to the regional economy. According to New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT), the sale of U.S. Massena Lines will render B&LE a bottleneck carrier for traffic currently moving south through CSX's Syracuse gateway. This has potential to put both on-line shippers – including Port of Oswego, Fort Drum, Novelis and Attis – and Class III railroads that connect exclusively with the U.S. Massena Lines – including Finger Lakes Railway – at a competitive disadvantage. I strongly urge you to consider these concerns while considering B&LE's application.

Additionally, I ask that you consider the impact this sale will have on the approximately 60 CSXT employees that service the rail line in Massena. These jobs are not only needed to safely and efficiently operate the rail line, but they are equally important to regional economy. It is critically important that these jobs are protected in the event the sale is approved.

Should this transaction be approved, New York stakeholders and I look forward to a partnership with B&LE to foster economic development along the U.S. Massena Lines and for B&LE to meet the transportation needs of their customers. However, it is critically important that local concerns about jobs, competitive services, prices and routing are properly addressed.

I thank you for your considering of this important matter. Should you have any further questions please do not hesitate to contact me or my staff.

Sincerely,



Charles E. Schumer
United States Senator