



Surface Transportation Board
Washington, D.C. 20423-0001

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Office of Proceedings
December 9, 2020
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Public Record

December 9, 2020

The Honorable Mitt Romney
United States Senate
124 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Mike Lee
United States Senate
361-A Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Rob Bishop
United States House of Representatives
123 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515-4401

The Honorable Chris Stewart
United States House of Representatives
2242 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515-4402

The Honorable John Curtis
United States House of Representatives
125 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515-4403

Dear Senator Romney, Senator Lee, Representative Bishop, Representative Stewart, and Representative Curtis:

Thank you for your recent letter regarding the proposed rail line that would connect the Uinta Basin in Utah to the interstate rail network. We appreciate knowing your support for the project.

As you know, on May 29, 2020, the Seven County Infrastructure Coalition (Coalition) filed a petition for exemption under 49 U.S.C. § 10502 from the prior approval requirements of 49 U.S.C. § 10901 for authorization to construct and operate an approximately 85-mile rail line connecting the Uinta Basin to the national rail network. The Coalition asks that the Board issue a preliminary decision addressing the transportation aspects of the project while the environmental review is ongoing.

With respect to the environmental review, the Board's Office of Environmental Analysis issued a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) on October 30, 2020, and held virtual public meetings to receive oral comments, the last of which took place on December 3, 2020. Written comments to the Draft EIS were to be due on December 14, 2020, but that deadline is being extended 45 days to January 28, 2021, following extension requests from a number of parties, including the Ute Indian Tribe of the Uintah and Ouray Reservation, due to the impact of COVID-19. The extended public comment period will afford the tribe and others a total of 90 days to comment.

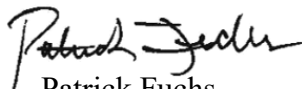
While we cannot comment on the merits of the Coalition's rail line proposal because it is currently pending before the Board, please know that we are giving full and fair consideration to the petition and all filings submitted in the proceeding.

Again, thank you for taking the time to inform us of your views. Your letter, along with this response, will be entered into the docket. If you or your staff have any questions, please contact us or Lucille Marvin, the Board's Director of the Office of Public Assistance, Governmental Affairs, and Compliance, at (202) 245-0238.

Sincerely,



Ann Begeman
Chairman



Patrick Fuchs
Board Member



Martin Oberman
Vice Chairman