

**UTE INDIAN TRIBE**

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September 22, 2021

Martin J. Oberman
Chairman
Surface Transportation Board
395 E Street S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20423

RE: Docket No. FD36284, Uinta Basin Railway

Dear Chairman Oberman,

The Ute Indian Tribe of the Uintah and Ouray reservation (the Ute Tribe) reaffirms its support for the Uinta Basin Railway project.

Oil and gas production on the reservation is the most significant source of revenue for the Ute Indian Tribe. Royalties derived from these minerals enable the Tribal government to provide critical services to its membership of almost 3,000 members. The highs and lows of commodity markets, economic cycles and geopolitical turmoil all pose risks to this vital source of funding used for education, health, policing, public works, housing, food services, natural resources and sovereign defense. The Uinta Basin Railroad enhances and expands access to both national and international markets which reduces these risks. Further, we assert that this is an appropriate example of the type of National infrastructure investment deemed vital by the Biden administration.

As a leader among energy producing Tribes, the Ute Tribe has developed a robust regulatory system that considers cultural and natural resources including threatened and endangered species. For almost 80 years oil and gas has been extracted from Ute Lands in a manner consistent with our values and consideration of our homeland. We have been and always will be the stewards of our land, air and water. Long before environmental justice became part of Federal permitting processes, the Ute people lived it, defined it, and today are most suitably equipped to understand its application within our jurisdictional lands.

The views of the Tribe relating to oil and gas development on its reservation must take precedence over the views of outside persons and parties with no management or authorities over the Tribe's reservation.

It is my hope that the Surface Transportation Board will determine the Environmental Impact Statement has sufficiently satisfied statute and move swiftly with final approval and issuance of license.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Edred Secakuku', with a stylized, flowing script.

Edred Secakuku
Vice-Chairman, Ute Business Committee

CC: Patrick J. Fuchs, Surface Transportation Board Member
Ann Begeman, Surface Transportation Board Member
Michelle A. Schultz, Surface Transportation Board Member
Robert E. Primus, Surface Transportation Board Member
Danielle Gosselin, Surface Transportation Board Office of Environmental Analysis
Deborah Ann Haaland, Secretary of the Interior
Ronald Alan Klain, Whitehouse Chief of Staff
Michael S. Regan, EPA Director
Thomas J. Vilsack, Forest Service
Colonel James Handura, US Army Corp of Engineers
Senate Environment and Public Works Committee Chairman Senator Thomas R. Carper
Senate Environment and Public Works Committee Ranking Member Senator Shelly Moore Capito
Senate Committee on Indian Affairs Chairman Senator Brian Schatz