

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

November 13, 2023

307457

Martin J. Oberman
Chairman
Surface Transportation Board
395 E Street, SW
Washington, DC 20423

ENTERED
Office of Proceedings
November 13, 2023
Part of
Public Record

Re: FD No. 36447, Lake Providence Port Commission—Feeder Line Application—Line of
Delta Southern Railroad Located in East Carroll and Madison Parishes, Louisiana

Dear Chairman Oberman:

We write to express our interest in a matter of pressing importance to the economic viability of southern Arkansas and northeast Louisiana. As you were recently made aware by our colleagues, Representatives Bruce Westerman and Troy Carter, the acquisition and restoration of the Lake Providence Rail Line is critical to one of the most underserved and impoverished regions in our nation. We respectfully request that you expedite your review and resolve this matter as soon as possible.

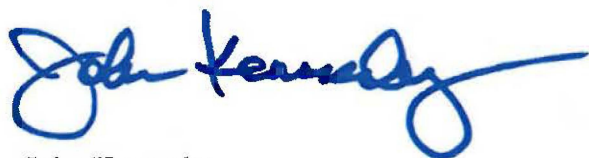
On October 8, 2021, we wrote to you regarding the application filed by Lake Providence Port Commission (LPPC) to acquire a portion of the Lake Providence Rail Line from Delta Southern Railroad, Inc. (DSR). Since LPPC's application was filed on November 12, 2020, significant delays and complications have prevented this critical interstate rail line's restoration, impacting local businesses and communities. It is our understanding that the Surface Transportation Board has been working diligently and taken initial steps; however, little progress appears to have been made since our last outreach.

Importantly, the justification for restoring this rail line has only grown more urgent. Historic drought conditions have driven the Mississippi River to its lowest levels ever and created conditions that have closed many ports and dramatically affected shipping capabilities. This could not come at a worse time for one of the largest agricultural producing regions of the country - when farmers are preparing to harvest their crops. A fully functioning rail line would allow ports to continue operations when river conditions stymie the delivery of crops to the nation and the world.

Finally, we believe the public interest favors the restoration of the entire rail corridor between McGehee, Arkansas and Tallulah, Louisiana to provide for improved and more efficient rail service. Given this objective, which is consistent with the Department of Transportation's 2019 INFRA Grant award to restore the entire Line for the benefit of all shippers in both Louisiana and Arkansas who wish to ship over the Line, we urge the Board to decide expeditiously whether the supplemental petition is complete.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter. Please do not hesitate to contact our offices should you require more information or wish to discuss this matter further.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "John Kennedy". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "John" being more prominent.

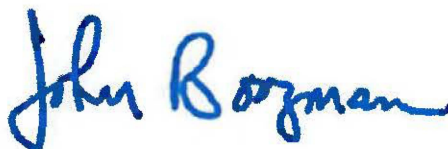
John Kennedy
United States Senator

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Bill Cassidy, M.D.". The signature is written in a cursive style, with the full name and title included.

Bill Cassidy, M.D.
United States Senator

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Tom Cotton". The signature is written in a cursive style, with the first name "Tom" being more prominent.

Tom Cotton
United States Senator

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "John Boozman". The signature is written in a cursive style, with the first name "John" being more prominent.

John Boozman
United States Senator

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Eric A. 'Rick' Crawford". The signature is written in a cursive style, with the first name "Eric" being more prominent.

Eric A. "Rick" Crawford
Member of Congress

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Julia Letlow". The signature is written in a cursive style, with the first name "Julia" being more prominent.

Julia Letlow
Member of Congress