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MIKE QUIGLEY
CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES
5TH DISTRICT, ILLINOIS

COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS
SUBCOMMITTEE ON
TRANSPORTATION, HOUSING AND URBAN
DEVELOPMENT AND RELATED AGENCIES
SUBCOMMITTEE ON
LEGISLATIVE BRANCH
SUBCOMMITTEE ON
NATIONAL SECURITY, DEPARTMENT
OF STATE, AND RELATED AGENCIES

**PERMANENT SELECT COMMITTEE
ON INTELLIGENCE**
SUBCOMMITTEE ON
DEFENSE INTELLIGENCE
AND OVERHEAD ARCHITECTURE
RANKING MEMBER

May 8th, 2025

309548

The Honorable Robert E. Primus
The Honorable Karen J. Hedlund
The Honorable Patrick J. Fuchs
The Honorable Michelle A. Schultz

Surface Transportation Board
395 E Street, SW
Washington, DC 20423

ENTERED
Office of Proceedings
May 8, 2025
Part of
Public Record

Re: Boxcar Leasing Rates

Dear Chairman Fuchs and Members of the Surface Transportation Board:

Thank you for your work to ensure the United States has a vibrant and healthy rail industry. In continuance of that mission, I am writing today to encourage the Surface Transportation Board (STB) to further evaluate the pricing system that governs railroads and boxcar owners. This system is examined in Docket No. EP 334 (Sub-No. 8A).

As you know, rail is the safest and most efficient mode for transporting goods. Boxcars are a vital piece of the rail system, moving critical commodities, including agricultural, forest, and industrial products. In 2023, over 1.1 million carloads shipped via boxcars, reaching businesses and consumer in every corner of the U.S..

Despite its importance, the health of the boxcar marketplace is in question. For the last two decades, more boxcars have been retired than constructed. Boxcar fleet size has declined 38% since 2008 and is expected to decline another 22% by 2030.

This is a concerning trend, both nationally and locally in my congressional district. Cook County, which makes up the majority of my congressional district, is the longstanding home to numerous companies that own significant portions of the boxcar fleet. Five of the six largest railcar leasing companies in the U.S. reside in Cook County, owning nearly 40% of the boxcars in use today. These companies, and the jobs they create, are important to the economy of northeast Illinois.

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Docket No. EP 334 examines the prior approval of Rule 25, governing the leasing rates for boxcar hire. Boxcar leasing rates must be set in a manner that allows for fair and open competition. Doing so will enable boxcar lessors to compete in a healthy marketplace and strengthen the U.S. rail industry. I understand the Association of American Railroads' (AAR) Equipment Asset Committee is currently reviewing the pricing system for boxcar leases, and that the STB will not be taking any action on this matter until the AAR committee work has concluded. I look forward to hearing STB's response to the output of the committee and any further action it plans to take on this matter.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Mike Quigley".

Mike Quigley
Member of Congress for Illinois Fifth District