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**The Honorable Patrick J. Fuchs,
Chairman
United States Surface Transportation Board
395 E Street SW Washington, DC 20423-0001**

**ENTERED
Office of Chief Counsel
August 6, 2025
Part of
Public Record**

RE: Docket No. EP 526 (Sub-No. 23)

Dear Chairman Fuchs:

I am pleased to nominate Bernard Clifford "Cliff" Grunstra for appointment as the small railroad representative on the Railroad-Shipper Transportation Advisory Council (RSTAC). Cliff currently serves as Executive Vice President and Chief Marketing Officer for Carload Express, Inc., a Pennsylvania-based Class III short line railroad company with operations in Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, and Western Pennsylvania.

Carload Express is a privately held and independently managed railroad without any private equity ownership or Wall Street interest. For over 30 years, the company has exemplified the values and challenges of the small railroad community, emphasizing customer service, long-term community relationships, responsible capital investment, and nimble problem-solving. Cliff's leadership reflects those same values and makes him exceptionally well-suited to serve on RSTAC.

In my railroad career, having worked with dozens of short lines and regional carriers prior to joining Carload Express, Cliff stands out for his customer-focused approach and success in building carload traffic and his ability to apply innovative ideas and technology to achieve successful outcomes. He is particularly effective at working collaboratively with customers to align infrastructure improvements with operational goals, and has led projects where Carload Express has invested alongside its customers to realize long-term rail-served solutions that benefit all parties. Cliff has stood beside customers facing zoning issues, car supply constraints, and engineering challenges, helping them navigate complex barriers to successfully grow merchandise traffic and gain access to the national rail network.

In his role at Carload Express, Cliff works directly with shippers, connecting carriers, and transload partners to create efficient rail transportation solutions. One notable example is his leadership in developing a local short-haul rail network in Delaware for agricultural products that successfully competes with trucks over distances as short as *50 miles*. This work exemplifies the kind of market-responsive initiative that strengthens the national rail network, improves service levels, and supports modal shift: key goals outlined in the RSTAC mission.

Cliff brings over 15 years of experience in the rail industry, including prior commercial roles as a Market Manager and Analyst at Norfolk Southern. He has deep experience in strategic marketing, pricing, customer relationship management, and stakeholder coordination. He understands both the constraints and the opportunities facing small railroads and has consistently advanced solutions that benefit rail customers and the broader freight transportation system.

Cliff is a U.S. citizen and is willing and able to serve upon appointment, and has the support of Carload Express in executing the duties of a small railroad representative to RSTAC.

Thank you for your consideration of this nomination. I am confident that Cliff Grunstra would be a valuable contributor to RSTAC's work in promoting a more effective and inclusive national rail transportation system.

Sincerely,

Michael S. Tetler
Executive Vice President & Chief Information Officer
Carload Express, Inc.