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October 20, 2025

ENTERED
Office of Chief Counsel
November 13, 2025
Part of
Public Record

Surface Transportation Board
Office of the Chief Counsel
395 E Street SW
Washington, DC 20423

Re: Proposed UP-NS Merger, Docket No. FD 36873

Dear Office of Chief Counsel,

Here in Talladega County—and across Alabama—freight rail is a lifeline. It keeps our businesses running, puts people to work, and connects our small towns to markets all across America. When the trains are moving, so is our economy.

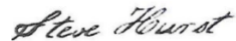
That's why I'm concerned about the news that Union Pacific and Norfolk Southern plan to merge. These are two of the biggest railroads in the country, and putting that much control in the hands of one company could make it harder for small communities like ours to compete. When competition goes down, costs tend to go up, and that eventually lands on the shoulders of our local businesses and families.

We've seen before how bottlenecks and service slowdowns can ripple through the whole supply chain—hurting manufacturers, small business owners, and even the folks just trying to keep food on the table. Alabama's economy has built its reputation on reliability and opportunity, and we want to keep it that way.

After nearly twenty years representing East Alabama, I've seen firsthand how strong, fair competition in the freight rail system helps our communities thrive. When this merger formally comes before you, I urge the Board to take a close look and make sure any changes promote safety and competition—without putting our regional economies at risk.

Thank you for your time and for the work you do to keep America's rail system safe, fair, and running strong.

Sincerely,



Steve Hurst
35th House District of Alabama

Cc: Parties of Record