

310227

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

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

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

Dear Office of Chief Council

My decades long business experience has enabled me to understand the importance of supply chain management and availability, especially for small business. For that reason I believe the proposed UP-NS merger presents a great amount of uncertainty and a likely increase in transportation cost.

Less competition in rail service leads to higher costs across the board. Unfortunately, when businesses can't absorb these costs – and most small businesses cannot, they eventually get passed down to consumers who are forced to pay more for the essential goods and products they need. Lack of competition also leads to less innovation of services tailored to small business.

Competition is the backbone of our economic system in America. I've consistently seen how when competition is reduced or unavailable small business is the first to suffer.

Competition drives long-term viability and lower costs. The success of businesses, employees and customers across Louisiana depend on a strong rail system. When Union Pacific and Norfolk Southern officially file, I hope that the Surface Transportation Board considers the impact on local businesses and ensures the tenets of the merger meet the standards for enhancing competition and safety. It is essential that the railroad industry stays competitive and healthy in order to protect everyday Americans. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Charlie Buckels', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Charlie Buckels
Lafayette, LA

Cc: Parties of Record, Small Business Administration, and
United States Department of Justice