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

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

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

Dear Office of Chief Counsel,

I live in rural Missouri and have spent my life helping harvest and haul row crops like corn, soybeans and wheat. I know this work, and I know just how much farmers depend on reliable and affordable rail service to keep things moving.

When harvest hits, timing is everything. We've got combines running sunup to sundown, and trucks lined up to get grain to the elevator to market. Without dependable rail service, things back up fast. Delays cost money, and when freight rates climb, it eats into already thin margins. That hits small towns hard, not just farmers, but grain elevators, truckers, fertilizer suppliers, seed dealers.

Fewer railroads mean fewer options. And when there's less competition, there's less incentive for service to improve or prices to stay reasonable.

With the talk of a merger between Union Pacific and Norfolk Southern I worry what that kind of consolidation will mean for agriculture. Will farmers have any choice left in how to move grain? Will rates go up? Will service be impacted? These are real concerns, and they deserve real attention.

The Surface Transportation Board needs to take a hard look at this proposal. Don't just listen to the big companies, listen to the people in the heartland who will feel the impact. Farmers and rural communities depend on fair, competitive rail service.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Mike Beardslee". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Mike Beardslee

Cc: Parties of Record
Governor of Missouri
Members of the Missouri Congressional Delegation