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October 21, 2024

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

To the Office of the Chief Counsel:

As a business owner, I understand how essential freight rail is to the success of our local economy. Whether it's moving raw materials, finished products, or the everyday goods our families depend on, reliable rail service keeps businesses running and communities like mine in Northeastern Ohio strong.

But I also know how fragile that system can be. When rail competition weakens, service suffers. Shipping costs rise, options shrink, and delays increase. Those burdens don't just hit businesses—they ripple through the supply chain until families feel them directly in the form of higher prices for groceries, household goods, and other essentials.

I am a capitalist, which is why I am concerned about the proposed merger between Union Pacific and Norfolk Southern, two of the nation's largest railroads. Consolidating two companies of this size would create an even tighter grip on the market, pushing the freight rail industry closer to a duopoly. For business owners like me who rely on dependable, affordable shipping across sectors, that means fewer choices and greater risk.

As the Surface Transportation Board reviews this merger, I urge you to consider its impact not only on large corporations but also on small businesses and the communities they anchor. Rail is more than a logistical system—it is the backbone of local economies, and we cannot afford changes that weaken competition or compromise safety.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,


Marcie Stammen
Marcie Stammen Studio

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