

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 Council,

My name is Ray Griffin, and I own Cochiara Marina in Lafitte, LA.

Recently two of the largest railroads in the United States, Union Pacific and Norfolk Southern, announced their intent to merge. Businesses like mine depend on reliable rail service to ship the supplies we need to operate and deliver our products to customers.

As a small business owner for 10 years, I've seen the effect large consolidations can have on small business operations. Poorly executed rail mergers slow service and cause congestion, disrupting the supply chain and our ability to get products to customers – and it's the mom-and-pop stores and new business trying to get on their feet like mine, who feel it the most.

If the merger is approved, Union Pacific and Norfolk Southern would form a near duopoly. This would be detrimental to competition. And competition is the backbone of our economic system in America. I've consistently seen how 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.

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 that reads "Ray Griffin". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Ray" being more prominent than the last name "Griffin".

Ray Griffin

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