

October 10, 2025

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,

As a multi-generational small family farmer, I understand the importance of freight rail. Reliable transit has always been essential to getting our crops to market and remaining competitive on a global scale.

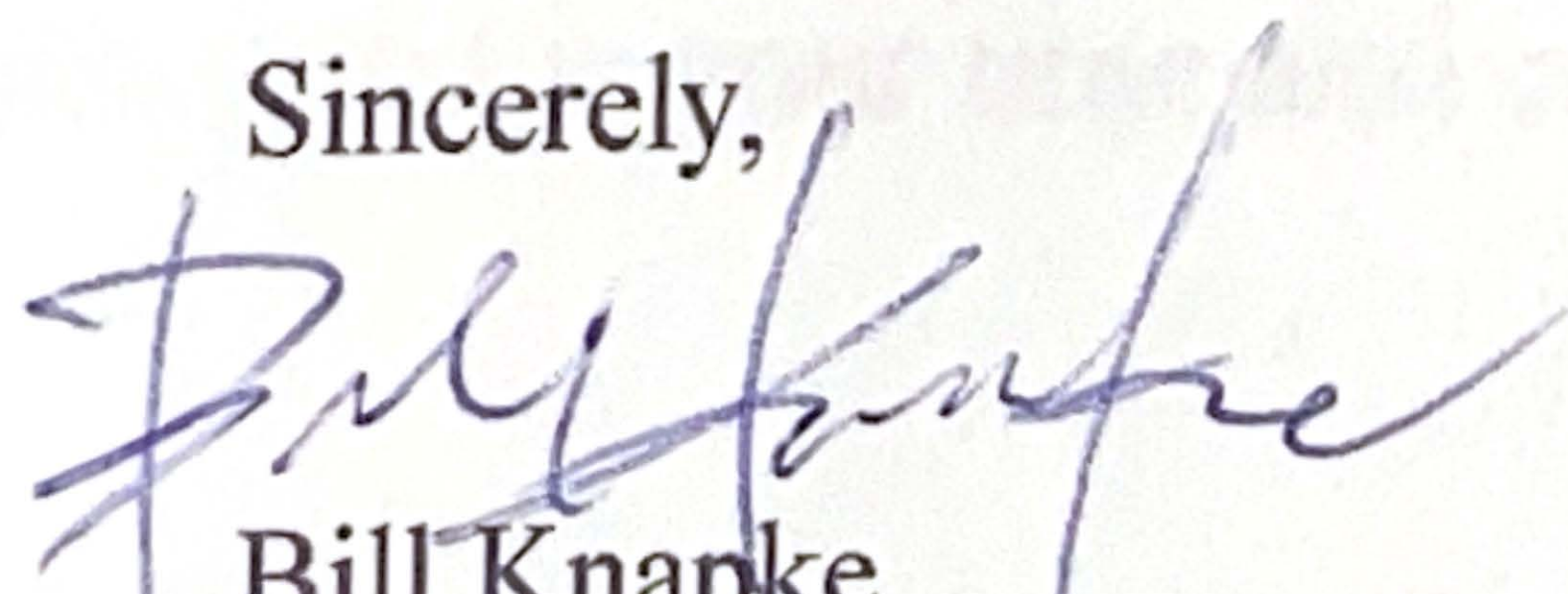
When rail service suffers—whether through rising rates, fewer options, or poorly structured mergers—the ripple effects spread across the supply chain. For farms like ours, these changes can mean the difference between a successful harvest and the closure of operations that have supported our community for decades.

Union Pacific and Norfolk Southern, two of the nation's largest railroads, recently announced plans to merge. I am deeply concerned about the effect this will have on competition. The freight rail industry is already controlled by a limited number of carriers, and combining these two giants would push the market closer to a duopoly. Farmers would face fewer choices, higher costs, and even tighter margins at a time when agriculture is already under strain.

I respectfully urge you to keep farmers and ranchers front of mind when reviewing this merger. Agriculture depends on a fair and competitive rail system, and we cannot afford changes that further erode it.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,


Bill Knapke
Fort Recovery, Ohio

Cc: Parties of Record
United States Department of Justice
United States Department of Agriculture,

310389

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