

October 3, 2025

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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,

My family has been farming for generations. We rely heavily on freight rail to move fertilizer and herbicides along with a way to bring our crops to market to ensure we can compete in the global market.

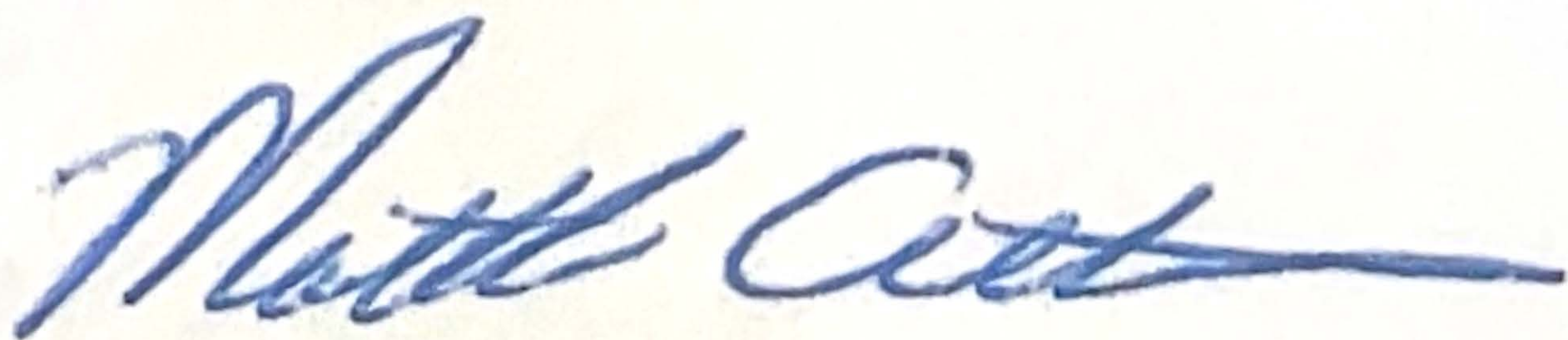
When rail service falters — whether through higher rates, reduced options, or poorly executed mergers— it creates ripple effects across the entire supply chain. These changes can be the difference between a profitable season or closing the doors on a farm that has sustained the community for generations.

Recently two of the largest railroads in the United States, Union Pacific and Norfolk Southern, announced their intent to merge. I am concerned about the impact this merger will have on competition. The freight rail industry is already dominated by a small number of players. If this merger is approved, the two companies would create a near duopoly, further reducing competition and leaving farmers with fewer options and higher costs at a time when margins are already razor thin. We already have reduced options and reducing them even further to allow one company to control the movements of goods will be detrimental to the future of feeding this country and the world.

I ask that you keep farmers and ranchers in mind when these companies formally file. Agriculture needs a competitive rail system to survive, and we cannot afford changes that would weaken that system further.

Thank you for your consideration on this matter.

Sincerely,



Matthew Aultman

Greenville, Ohio

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