

State Senator
JUDY AMABILE
Colorado State Capitol
200 East Colfax Avenue
Denver, Colorado 80302
Office: 303-866-4872
Cell: 303-517-4698
Email: judy.amabile.senate@coleg.gov



COLORADO STATE SENATE
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Joint Budget Committee
Appropriations Committee Chair

310688

ENTERED
Office of Chief Counsel
January 9, 2026
Part of
Public Record

January 8, 2026

Chairman Patrick J. Fuchs
Surface Transportation Board
Re: Uinta Basin Railway (FD 36284)
Urgent Request for Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement

Chairman Fuchs:

I am writing on behalf of my constituents and all Coloradans regarding the Surface Transportation Board's ongoing consideration of the Uinta Basin Railway project (Docket No. FD 36284). I urge the Board to prepare a supplemental Environmental Impact Statement that fully addresses the deficiencies identified by the Supreme Court in its May decision. Additional environmental review is necessary to ensure a complete, lawful, and credible evaluation of the risks this project poses to affected communities and resources.

I also urge the Board to prepare a supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) before taking any further action. An updated and thorough re-evaluation is essential to ensure the integrity and legitimacy of the Board's decision-making process and to restore public confidence, particularly among Colorado communities that have raised serious concerns for years but have largely felt unheard.

The risks associated with this project are significant and unavoidable. Transporting crude oil by rail through Colorado's communities, watersheds, and sensitive landscapes presents an inherent likelihood of accidents and spills. These risks threaten the Colorado River, public health, wildlife habitat, agricultural operations, and the tourism economy that sustains many communities across our state. In a time of worsening drought and heightened wildfire danger, Colorado simply cannot afford additional environmental hazards.

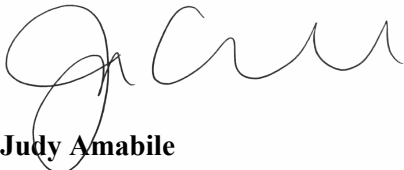
In addition to environmental concerns, the Board must take a hard look at the project's financial viability. The 2021 EIS relied in part on an economic study that is now seven years old and did not evaluate construction along the route the Railway currently proposes to use. That analysis is no longer sufficient.

Moreover, the Railway has stated that it intends to finance much of this more than \$3 billion project through taxpayer-subsidized private activity bonds. However, the U.S. Department of Transportation—which administers these bonds—has already allocated all funds Congress made available. As a result, this financing mechanism is not currently available to the project, calling into question its ability to move forward and to implement required mitigation measures. An updated economic analysis is therefore necessary to assess whether the Railway can realistically meet its obligations.

Colorado's communities deserve a fair and comprehensive evaluation of this project's environmental and economic impacts. A supplemental EIS is needed to ensure that the Board's ultimate decision is informed by current conditions, credible data, and meaningful public input.

Thank you for your attention to this matter and for your consideration of the serious concerns raised by Colorado's communities.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Judy Amabile', with a large, stylized initial 'J'.

Judy Amabile
Colorado State Senator, District 18
303-517-4698