

## **Speaker of the Missouri House of Representatives Jon Patterson**

Comments of Speaker Jon Patterson in Opposition to the Proposed Union Pacific and Norfolk Southern Merger

Surface Transportation Board

Docket No. FD 36873

I live in Jackson County Missouri and oppose Union Pacific's proposed acquisition of Norfolk Southern. I ask the Board to reject the application.

In my community, Union Pacific's Sedalia Subdivision is the line that runs through Lee's Summit. Independence's Amtrack Station is on the same line. The Missouri River Runner uses this route and stops at both Independence and Lee's Summit. It is my hope that the Board investigates whether residents, emergency responders, school buses, and local businesses would face longer or more frequent delays at crossings. This merger feels rushed and a further investigation should take place.

I believe Missouri and the country are better served when major railroads must compete for business. This transaction would place a much larger share of the national rail network under one company's control. The applicants may expect benefits from operating a combined system, but the Board must decide whether the transaction benefits the public and preserves meaningful competition.

A loss of meaningful competition could leave that business with less influence over rates and service. Its costs and delays can affect workers, customers, and other businesses nearby.

I do not want Missouri communities to bear those risks for a transaction whose public benefits have not been demonstrated locally. I ask the Board to examine the merger's effects on competition, traffic, and community access in Jackson County and across the national rail system, and to deny the application.

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Jon Patterson, Speaker, Missouri House of Representatives  
201 W Capitol Ave, 300  
Jefferson City, MO 65101  
Jon.patterson@house.mo.gov

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