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BEFORE THE SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BOARD

Docket No. FD 36873

UNION PACIFIC CORPORATION AND UNION PACIFIC RAILROAD COMPANY — CONTROL — NORFOLK SOUTHERN CORPORATION AND NORFOLK SOUTHERN RAILWAY COMPANY

November 8, 2026

COMMENTS OF ALL ABOARD MINNESOTA

All Aboard Minnesota respectfully submits these comments regarding the proposed acquisition of Norfolk Southern by Union Pacific and the resulting combination of the two rail systems.

All Aboard Minnesota is a nonprofit citizen advocacy and education organization supporting the preservation and expansion of intercity passenger rail service in Minnesota and throughout the Upper Midwest. Our organization works to educate the public and policymakers about the transportation, economic, mobility, and community benefits that expanded passenger rail can provide.

We do not submit these comments to address the broader competitive merits of the proposed transaction. Rather, we ask the Surface Transportation Board to consider an important public-interest opportunity presented by the transaction: facilitating expanded intercity passenger rail service over appropriate Union Pacific corridors.

If the transaction is approved, the resulting Union Pacific system would constitute an extraordinarily large national rail network. We believe approval should be accompanied by a commitment from Union Pacific to work constructively and in good faith with states, passenger rail authorities, the Federal Railroad Administration, Amtrak, and other qualified passenger rail operators seeking to establish service on appropriate corridors.

In particular, All Aboard Minnesota asks the Board and Union Pacific to consider two Upper Midwest corridors with significant potential for expanded intercity passenger rail service.

Twin Cities–Des Moines–Kansas City

All Aboard Minnesota has long advocated development of passenger rail service connecting the Twin Cities, Des Moines and Kansas City using the existing Union Pacific corridor through southern Minnesota and Iowa.

This corridor would connect three significant metropolitan regions while also providing service to communities that currently have little or no access to intercity passenger rail. Potential communities served include St. Paul/Minneapolis, Northfield, Faribault, Owatonna and Albert Lea in Minnesota; Mason City, the Ames area and Des Moines in Iowa; and Kansas City, Missouri.

The corridor also offers significant network value. In southern Iowa, passengers could connect with existing Amtrak services between Chicago, Omaha, Denver and points west. At Kansas City, passengers could connect with existing Amtrak services to destinations throughout the central, western and southwestern United States. At the Twin Cities, passengers could connect with existing and future passenger rail services throughout Minnesota, Wisconsin and the Upper Midwest.

All Aboard Minnesota has conducted a detailed study of this corridor examining potential routing, infrastructure, stations, schedules and ridership. We believe the corridor warrants further development in cooperation with the Minnesota Department of Transportation, Iowa Department of Transportation, Missouri Department of Transportation, the Federal Railroad Administration, Union Pacific and other appropriate parties.

Twin Cities–Eau Claire–Chicago

We similarly encourage Union Pacific to facilitate development of passenger rail service between the Twin Cities and Chicago using the Union Pacific corridor through western and central Wisconsin, including Eau Claire.

Passenger rail development between the Twin Cities and Eau Claire is already the subject of public planning efforts, and the broader corridor presents the opportunity eventually to create an additional Twin Cities–Chicago passenger rail route serving Eau Claire and other Wisconsin communities.

Such a route could complement, rather than replace, existing passenger rail service between Minnesota, Wisconsin and Illinois and could provide additional capacity, geographic coverage, schedule choices and resiliency within the regional passenger rail network.

A Framework for Cooperation

Freight railroads understandably must protect the safety, reliability and capacity of their freight operations. All Aboard Minnesota is not asking the Board to require passenger service without appropriate planning, engineering analysis, infrastructure investment or compensation.

We are asking for something more fundamental: a commitment that passenger rail proposals involving Union Pacific infrastructure receive a fair opportunity to advance.

If the merger is approved, we therefore encourage the Board to obtain commitments from Union Pacific establishing a cooperative framework for proposed passenger rail service on its network. Such a framework should include:

1. **Good-faith negotiations.** Union Pacific should engage in timely and good-faith discussions with state departments of transportation, interstate or regional rail authorities, the Federal Railroad Administration and other public sponsors seeking to develop passenger rail service.

2. **Reasonable operating analysis.** Union Pacific should cooperate in identifying the operating requirements, capacity constraints and infrastructure improvements reasonably necessary to accommodate proposed passenger service while protecting freight operations.
3. **Reasonable infrastructure requirements.** Infrastructure improvements requested as a condition of passenger service should be reasonably related to the capacity, safety and operational impacts created by the proposed passenger service.
4. **Transparent and timely processes.** Studies, modeling, negotiations and agreements should proceed according to mutually established schedules so that passenger rail projects are not subjected to unnecessary or indefinite delays.
5. **Scheduling cooperation.** Union Pacific and passenger rail sponsors should work collaboratively to develop schedules that provide useful passenger service while reasonably accommodating freight operations.
6. **Operator flexibility.** Where permitted by federal law and applicable agreements, Union Pacific should be willing to consider passenger operations by Amtrak or another qualified operator mutually acceptable to the relevant public agencies and host railroad.
7. **Fair and reasonable costs.** Access charges, infrastructure requirements and other costs associated with passenger operations should be transparent, supportable and reasonably related to the actual costs and impacts associated with providing the service.
8. **Consideration of future passenger needs in capital planning.** Where Union Pacific undertakes significant capacity or infrastructure improvements on corridors that have been identified for potential passenger service, the railroad should consult with appropriate public agencies regarding whether reasonable design accommodations could facilitate future passenger operations.

The Merger Presents an Opportunity

The proposed Union Pacific–Norfolk Southern transaction is potentially transformative for the nation's rail system. Its significance should be measured not only by its effects on freight transportation, but also by whether the resulting rail network can better serve the broader transportation needs of the country.

Passenger and freight rail need not be competing objectives. With appropriate infrastructure investment, planning and cooperation, existing rail corridors can accommodate both important freight movements and expanded passenger service.

The Twin Cities–Des Moines–Kansas City and Twin Cities–Eau Claire–Chicago corridors illustrate that opportunity. Both would connect major metropolitan areas, provide transportation alternatives to communities currently lacking passenger rail service, strengthen connections within the national passenger rail network, and make productive use of existing rail corridors.

All Aboard Minnesota therefore respectfully requests that, in considering Docket No. FD 36873, the Surface Transportation Board recognize expanded passenger rail as an important public-interest consideration and encourage or require, as appropriate, commitments from Union Pacific

to engage constructively with public agencies seeking to develop passenger service over its network.

At a minimum, any approval of this transaction should preserve and enhance—not diminish—the ability of states and regional partners to pursue reasonable passenger rail opportunities over Union Pacific-owned corridors.

All Aboard Minnesota stands ready to work constructively with Union Pacific, state departments of transportation, the Federal Railroad Administration, Amtrak, other potential passenger rail operators, communities and other stakeholders to advance these opportunities.

Respectfully submitted,



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