John F. Vessels
General Chairperson

Javier Ramirez
Vice General Chairperson

Michael M. Buckley
Secretary

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TRANSIT AMERICA SERVICES, INC. (TASI/CALTRAIN)
KEOLIS RAIL SERVICES VIRGINIA (KRSV/VRE)
ALSTOM TRANSPORT SERVICES, INC.
KEOLIS COMMUTER SERVICES (KCS)
HERZOG, INC. (TRI-RAIL/NMRX)
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Office of Chief Counsel
November 16, 2026
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Public Record

November 16, 2026

Surface Transportation Board
395 E Street SW
Washington, DC 20423

RE: Docket FD 36873, Support for the Proposed Union Pacific–Norfolk Southern Merger

Members of the Board:

I serve as General Chairperson of SMART Transportation Division General Committee GO-769, representing approximately 2000+ members in the Conductor craft across the entire country that operates daily over many UP and NS territories. I support approval of the proposed Union Pacific–Norfolk Southern merger. My 27 years of railroad experience and responsibility for enforcing our agreements give me the perspective to make this endorsement with confidence.

Connecting UP's western network with NS's eastern network offers an opportunity to reduce interchange delays and give shippers faster, seamless service. Better service can attract freight now moving by truck and create more work for the railroaders I represent. In the Northeast, there are many industries connected to the Corridor that can expand endlessly to support additional work.

SMART-TD's Jobs for Life agreement is a central reason for my support. If this merger is approved and completed, covered members will gain career-long job, craft, and location protections. For railroaders who have faced furloughs and uncertainty, these enforceable commitments provide a stronger foundation for their careers. Having a steady foundation that supports a quality of life is critical for all members young and old. Stability plays a crucial part to every member and their family. This merger would give members a sense of security and a peace of mind knowing their jobs are secure for years to come.

Our General Committee is prepared to enforce the Jobs for Life agreement and other applicable agreements throughout the transition. We will hold the railroad accountable for honoring its commitments and protecting our members' rights. Our committee is committed to ensuring our members are protected so they can protect the work and keep the supply chain moving.

I ask the Board to approve the proposed merger with appropriate safeguards and oversight addressing employees, safety, service reliability, and competition. Approval, along with the SMART-TD agreement that accompanies it, offers the opportunity to grow freight traffic while giving railroaders the career protections their union negotiated.

In Solidarity,

John F. Vessels

John F. Vessels
General Chairman

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I certify that I have this day served copies of this document upon all parties of record in this proceeding, by email to those parties who have accepted email service and by first-class mail to all others, consistent with 49 C.F.R. § 1104.12(a).

November 16, 2026

John F. Vessels
General Chairman
General Committee of Adjustment GO-769