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Office of Chief Counsel
Novermber 18, 2026
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Public Record

November 18, 2026

By E-Filing

Ms. Cynthia T. Brown
Chief of Case Administration
Office of Chief Counsel
Surface Transportation Board
395 E Street, SW
Washington, DC 20423

Re: Docket No. FD 36873 (Sub-No. 57), *Union Pacific Corporation, et al. – Control – Norfolk Southern Corporation, et al*

Dear Ms. Brown:

Attached for filing in the referenced sub-docket created for the Responsive Application filed by New Orleans Terminal Railroad, LLC ("NOTR") in Docket No. FD 36873 are several letters of support for the proposed transaction and NOTR becoming the neutral terminal railroad in the New Orleans Terminal Area.

Sincerely,

Thomas W. Wilcox

Attorney for New Orleans Terminal Railroad, LLC

CC: Parties of Record and Judge Soulikias

November 17, 2026

The Honorable Patrick J. Fuchs
Chairman
Surface Transportation Board
395 E Street, S.W.
Washington, DC 20423-0001

Re: Docket No. FD 36873, Union Pacific Corporation and Union Pacific Railroad Company, Control, Norfolk Southern Corporation and Norfolk Southern Railway Company; Responsive Application of New Orleans Terminal Railroad Company, LLC

Dear Chairman Fuchs:

I am writing in support of the responsive application filed by New Orleans Terminal Railroad Company, LLC ("NOTR") in this proceeding. I have agreed to work with NOTR as an operating consultant, and I want the Board to understand why I am willing to put my name on it.

I spent my career in railroad operations. At Union Pacific I was General Manager of the Gulf Coast service unit, which included New Orleans, and I held senior leadership roles in UP's Harriman Dispatching Center in Omaha. I later served as President and Chief Operating Officer of Conrail before retiring. I mention those jobs only because each one taught me something that bears directly on this case.

The first lesson came from Harriman. Dispatching decides who moves and who waits. Most people outside the industry never see that, but anybody who has spent time on a dispatching floor knows it. A dispatcher working single track with a meet to make has to pick a train to hold, and dozens of those calls get made every shift. Our dispatchers at Harriman were good people doing an honest job. They were also measured on how UP's trains performed: velocity, dwell, crew starts. When a UP train and a foreign-line train show up at the same control point, the incentives point one direction. Nobody must write a memo telling anyone to favor the home road. It happens on its own. I say that from experience, not suspicion.

That is not a criticism of Union Pacific. Every Class I railroad works the same way, and it should, because each one answers to its own customers and shareholders. The problem comes when one railroad holds the dispatching keys to a chokepoint that five other railroads and Amtrak depend on, and that same railroad competes with them for the freight.

The second lesson came from running the Gulf Coast. New Orleans is one of the hardest pieces of railroad in the country to operate. All six Class I railroads meet there (UP, BNSF, CN, CSX, NS and CPKC), and Amtrak runs through it. The Huey P. Long Bridge is the only rail crossing of the Mississippi in the New Orleans area, and on the east bank the Back Belt carries much of the interchange between the western and eastern carriers. When either one backs up, the whole gateway backs up, and recovery can take days.

Today that corridor is split. UP dispatches the Huey P. Long Bridge, which the Public Belt owns, and NS owns and dispatches the Back Belt. The split has its frictions, but it provides a natural check: no single railroad controls the whole path from the west bank to the eastern connections. If the merger is approved without a condition, that check goes away. The combined UP-NS would dispatch the bridge and own and dispatch the Back Belt, which is the route BNSF, CSX, and Amtrak use to get through New Orleans. Local interchange traffic is also moved by the CSX and NS to the CN utilizing the Back Belt. All of this traffic would be competing with most of them for the traffic moving through that gateway.

I do not believe a trackage rights order or a reporting requirement alone will fix that. Access on paper does not mean much when your train is sitting at a red signal for four hours, and in most cases, there is no record that shows why it sat. I have seen it at New Orleans and so has nearly everyone who has worked there. The fix must be at the dispatcher's desk.

That is what New Orleans Terminal Railroad (NOTR) does. It puts the corridor under a railroad that does not run its own trains through New Orleans and has no Class I owner. Its dispatchers will be measured on one thing: moving every carrier's trains safely and fairly under published rules. That is the right incentive, and in my judgment, it is the only one that holds up at a shared chokepoint over the long term.

The third lesson came from Conrail. Conrail today serves two competing owners, NS and CSX, in the Shared Assets Areas of North Jersey, South Jersey/Philadelphia and Detroit. Our job every day was to serve competitors fairly, and both owners watched closely to make sure we did. Neutral terminal operation works when the operator is independent, the rules are published, and the people in the chair understand that fairness is the product. NOTR is built on those same principles, with one improvement: it has no Class I owner at all.

I have reviewed NOTR's operating plan, and it is practical. It keeps the existing control points and mileposts, operates under GCOR with a standalone train dispatcher manual adapted from a proven Class I manual, and puts experienced Gulf Coast dispatchers in a New Orleans office with a tested backup site. NOTR plans to use Wabtec TMDS with visibility into the connecting carriers' subdivisions, so its dispatchers can see what is coming before it arrives, and to hold planning calls with the carriers twice a day. It also intends to bring the full Back Belt under CTC. Those are the details of a plan written by someone who has run trains.

Bryan Boaz is the right person to lead this, and I do not say that based on a resume. I worked with Bryan extensively while I was General Manager at UP and he was running Gulf Coast rail operations for ExxonMobil. We worked together on new service, but most of our time was spent on the hard days: service outages, multiple hurricanes, winter storms and COVID-19. We worked out reroute options and built service plans that gave ExxonMobil a strong, reliable product out of several Gulf Coast origins. During COVID that mattered well beyond ExxonMobil. Hundreds, if not thousands, of its customers were facing a supply chain crisis for raw materials ExxonMobil manufactured, including chemicals used to make hand sanitizer and polypropylene for medical equipment. Without that collaboration, many of those shipments would have been delayed one to

two weeks. Our paths crossed again when I was at Conrail, with Bryan on the customer side, and we worked through service challenges together at two New Jersey facilities, the IMTT terminal in Bayway and the ExxonMobil lubes plant in Paulsboro. I have seen how he handles a railroad under pressure, and that is exactly what a neutral terminal operator needs.

Bryan also knows the job from the ground up. He started at Kansas City Southern as a conductor and worked his way up to Director of International Business Development. He then spent years on the shipper side, including his time at ExxonMobil, one of the largest rail shippers in the region, and he chaired the American Petroleum Institute's Rail Subcommittee for a number of years. Few people understand both the operating side and the customer side of Gulf Coast railroading as well as he does. That matters here, because a neutral terminal railroad has to earn the trust of six Class I carriers, Amtrak, the Port and the shippers who pay the freight bill. I have watched Bryan earn that kind of trust firsthand.

I have agreed to work with NOTR in a consulting capacity through startup and into steady-state operations. I expect to help with dispatcher hiring and training, cutover planning with the carriers, and the operating protocols for each railroad. I do not put my name on things I do not believe in, and at this stage of my career I do not need to.

New Orleans is the southern gateway where East meets West, and it is the only U.S. deep-water port served by all six Class I railroads. If the Board approves this merger, competition through that gateway will depend largely on who sits at the dispatching desk. I respectfully urge the Board to grant NOTR's responsive application and to make neutral dispatching of the New Orleans corridor a condition of any approval.

I would welcome the opportunity to answer any questions the Board or its staff may have.

Respectfully,

Brian E. Gorton

Brian Gorton
Retired President and Chief Operating Officer, Conrail
Former General Manager, Gulf Coast Service Unit, Union Pacific Railroad

JENNIFER VAN VRANCKEN
COUNCIL CHAIRWOMAN

November 13, 2026

The Honorable Patrick Fuchs, Chairman
Surface Transportation Board
395 E Street, SW
Washington, D.C. 20423-0001

Re: Finance Docket No. FD 36873, Union Pacific Corporation and Norfolk Southern Corporation, Responsive Application of New Orleans Terminal Railroad Company, LLC

Dear Chairman Fuchs:

I represent the people of Jefferson Parish, Louisiana which includes the portion of Metairie where the Back Belt rail line runs through the vibrant Old Metairie neighborhood. I write in support of the responsive application filed by New Orleans Terminal Railroad Company, LLC ("NOTR") in the above proceeding.

Daily life is constantly interrupted for Metairie residents living and working near the trains that run on the Back Belt. Lengthy trains or those stopped completely at the Metairie Road and Little Farms Avenue crossings delay commuters, school buses, and at times even emergency vehicles. Local elected leaders, business owners and residents have raised concern for years, but we often have difficulty getting information about why a train is stopped or when it will move again-- because those decisions are made by people far from Jefferson Parish.

The proposed merger of Union Pacific and Norfolk Southern may exacerbate the problem. New Orleans is the only deep-water port in the country served by all six Class I railroads, and the Back Belt and the Huey P. Long Bridges are the main routes those railroads use to get across our region. If the merged company owns the Back Belt and controls dispatching across the river, one railroad will decide how traffic moves for all six of them, and for the people of Metairie who live alongside the tracks. I do not oppose the proposed merger, but this is a very particular problem that needs a specific solution.

NOTR's proposal offers a practical answer. As I understand it, NOTR would acquire the Back Belt from Norfolk Southern and take over dispatching on the corridor from the Huey P. Long Bridge to the CN connection. NOTR would remain independent of every Class I railroad, publish its rates openly, and treat every freight carrier the same, while also prioritizing Amtrak. Just as important to my constituents, NOTR plans to run its dispatch office here in the New Orleans area with staff who are experienced Gulf Coast dispatchers. When a crossing in Metairie is blocked, we would have a local operator with a stake in this community to call, and one whose job is to keep the whole corridor moving instead of favoring any single railroad's trains.

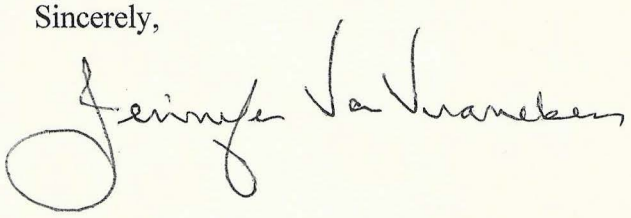
1221 ELMWOOD PARK BLVD., SUITE 1016 | JEFFERSON, LA 70123
200 DERBIGNY ST., SUITE 6200 | GRETNA, LA 70053
OFFICE: 504.736.6615 | EMAIL: JENNIFER@JEFFPARISH.GOV

I would not expect any railroad to promise that our crossings will never be blocked. However, a neutral operator that coordinates all train movements across the corridor is in a much stronger position to reduce unnecessary delays—and that matters to Metairie, to the Port, and to the shippers across Louisiana who rely on competitive rail service.

For these reasons, **I respectfully urge the Board to approve NOTR's responsive application as a condition of any approval of the Union Pacific and Norfolk Southern merger**.

Please feel free to contact my office with any questions at 504-736-6615 or Jennifer@JeffParish.gov

Sincerely,



cc: Bryan Boaz, President, New Orleans Terminal Railroad Company, LLC

SENATE
STATE OF LOUISIANA

J. CAMERON HENRY JR.
PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE

P.O. BOX 94183
BATON ROUGE, LA 70804
(225) 342-9990

November 8, 2026

The Honorable Patrick Fuchs, Chairman
Surface Transportation Board
395 E Street, SW
Washington, D.C. 20423-0001

Re: Finance Docket No. FD 36873, Union Pacific Corporation and Norfolk Southern Corporation, Responsive Application of New Orleans Terminal Railroad Company, LLC

Dear Chairman Fuchs:

I write in support of the responsive application filed by New Orleans Terminal Railroad Company, LLC ("NOTR") in the above proceeding. I represent Louisiana Senate District 9, which includes the portion of Metairie where the Back Belt rail line runs through our neighborhoods. Few issues reach my office as often as this line does.

For generations, Metairie residents have planned their days around trains on the Back Belt. Long or stopped trains at Metairie Road and Little Farms Avenue hold up commuters and school buses, and at times they hold up emergency vehicles too. Parish officials, local businesses and I have raised these concerns for years. We have often had trouble getting a clear answer about why a train is stopped or when it will move, because the decisions are made by people who are far from Jefferson Parish.

The proposed merger of Union Pacific and Norfolk Southern would make that problem harder, not easier. New Orleans is the only deep-water port in the country served by all six Class I railroads, and the Back Belt and the Huey P. Long Bridges are the main routes those railroads use to get across our region. If the merged company owns the Back Belt and controls dispatching across the river, one railroad will decide how traffic moves for all six of them, and for the people of Metairie who live alongside the tracks. I do not oppose the proposed merger, but this is a very particular problem that needs a specific solution.

NOTR's proposal offers a practical answer. As I understand it, NOTR would acquire the Back Belt from Norfolk Southern and take over dispatching on the corridor from the Huey P. Long Bridge to the CN connection. NOTR would remain independent of every Class I railroad, publish its rates openly, and treat every freight carrier the same, while also prioritizing Amtrak. Just as important to my constituents, NOTR plans to run its dispatch office here in New Orleans and staff it with experienced Gulf Coast dispatchers. When a crossing in Metairie is blocked, we would have a local operator with a stake in this community to call, and one whose job is to keep the whole corridor moving instead of favoring any single railroad's trains.

I would not expect any railroad to promise that our crossings will never be blocked. However, a neutral operator that coordinates all train movements across the corridor is in a much better position to cut down on unnecessary delays than one railroad managing its own traffic first. That matters for Metairie, for the Port, and for the shippers across Louisiana who rely on competitive rail service to reach the river.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the Board to approve NOTR's responsive application as a condition of any approval of the Union Pacific and Norfolk Southern merger. Please feel free to contact my office at 504-838-5433 or henryc@legis.la.gov with any questions.

Sincerely,



J. Cameron Henry, Jr.
President, Louisiana State Senate
Senate District 9

cc: Bryan Boaz, President, New Orleans Terminal Railroad Company, LLC

LOUISIANA SENATE

9523 Jefferson Highway, Suite B
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Education
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M. KIRK TALBOT
State Senator ~ District 10

1-13-26

The Honorable Patrick Fuchs, Chairman
Surface Transportation Board
395 E Street, SW
Washington, DC 20423-0001

Re: Finance Docket No. FD 36873, Union Pacific Corporation and Norfolk Southern Corporation, Responsive Application of New Orleans Terminal Railroad Company, LLC

Dear Chairman Fuchs:

I write in support of the responsive application filed by New Orleans Terminal Railroad Company, LLC ("NOTR") in the above proceeding. I represent Louisiana Senate District 10, which includes the portion of Harahan where the Back Belt rail line runs through our neighborhoods and industrial parks. Additionally, the Huey P. Long Bridge which feeds into the back belt is also included in my district.

Harahan residents and business owners have planned their days around Back Belt activity. Long or stopped trains can hold up commuters and negatively impact businesses.. Parish officials, local businesses and I have raised these concerns for years. We have often had trouble getting a clear answer about why a train is stopped or when it will move, because the decisions are made by people who are far from Jefferson Parish.

The proposed merger of Union Pacific and Norfolk Southern in it's current posture would not solve this issue.. New Orleans is the only deep-water port in the country served by all six Class I railroads, and the Back Belt and the Huey P. Long Bridge are the main routes those railroads use to get across our region. If the merged company owns the Back Belt and controls dispatching across the river, one railroad will decide how traffic moves for all six of them, and for the people throughout Jefferson Parish who must traverse the tracks. I do not oppose the merger, but I believe that issue must be addressed in a definitive way that improves lives for our residents

NOTR addresses this issue in its proposal. As I understand it, NOTR would acquire the Back Belt from Norfolk Southern and take over dispatching on the corridor from the Huey P. Long Bridge to the CN connection. NOTR would remain independent of every Class I railroad, publish its rates openly, and treat every freight carrier the same, while also prioritizing Amtrak. Just as important to my constituents, NOTR plans to run its dispatch office here in the Greater New Orleans area and staff it with experienced Gulf Coast dispatchers. When there are crossing issues in Jefferson Parish, we would have a local operator with a stake in this community to call, and

LOUISIANA SENATE

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COMMITTEES:
Insurance, Chairman
Education
Judiciary B
Retirement

M. KIRK TALBOT
State Senator ~ District 10

one whose job is to keep the whole corridor moving instead of favoring any single railroad's trains.

I don't expect any railroad to promise that our crossings will never be blocked, every policy maker knows that is an impossible task. However, a neutral operator that coordinates all train movements across the corridor is in a much better position to cut down on unnecessary delays than one railroad managing its own traffic first. That matters for Harahan, Jefferson Parish as a whole and for the shippers across Louisiana who rely on competitive rail service to reach the river.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the Board to approve NOTR's responsive application as a condition of any approval of the Union Pacific and Norfolk Southern merger. Please feel free to contact my office at (504) 736-7299 or talbotk@legis.la.gov] with any questions.

Sincerely,

Kirk Talbot
Louisiana State Senate
District 10

cc: Bryan Boaz, President, New Orleans Terminal Railroad Company, LLC

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I hereby certify that on this 18th day of November 2026, I served a copy of the foregoing document by electronic mail upon all parties of record on the official service list for Docket No. FD 36873.

/ss/ Thomas W. Wilcox

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Thomas W. Wilcox