



October 27, 2023

Andrea Poole
Surface Transportation Board
Environmental Filing, Docket No. FD 36616
395 E. Street SW
Washington, DC 20423

Dear Ms. Poole:

The Salt Lake Chamber is pleased to support the Savage Tooele Railroad (STR) and its proposed rail line to serve the Lakeview Business Park (LBP) tenants in Grantsville, Utah. Furthermore, we support the Office of Environmental Analysis making a recommendation to the Surface Transportation Board based on the merits of the project and the findings of the Draft Environmental Assessment (EA).

The Draft EA concludes that the STR would have minimal impacts on several environmental resource areas, including air quality, energy, land use, zoning and local plans, and historic resources. (p. S-3). Given the findings of the Draft EA, it appears clear that the proposed STR would not pose significant environmental risks and that any potential risks can be effectively mitigated.

Implementation of the STR will result in benefits consistent with state and federal objectives concerning more environmentally sustainable freight movement by shifting the mode of transportation from truck to rail. Rail connectivity into the LBP provides businesses the ability to transport products and materials via rail, which more than doubles the fuel efficiency of transporting cargo via truck.^[1] In addition, the anticipated air quality benefits of reducing the number of trucks on the road are significant, particularly in light of Utah's air quality challenges.

Not only that, re-establishing the six miles of previously abandoned rail infrastructure will provide modal choice for tenants of the LBP and will contribute to the business park's investment attraction, leading to employment creation and bolstering the economic vitality of the rapidly growing region. Currently, there is insufficient rail infrastructure in Tooele County to accommodate the demands of a rising population for manufacturing, distribution and warehousing facilities. The STR will aid in meeting these needs.

Savage Co. is regarded as an engaged corporate citizen, meriting their recognition as the 2020 Utah International Business of the Year and the business recipient of the 2019 Utah Ethical Leadership Award. Savage is also committed to being a good partner to the communities in which they operate, as highlighted by the support previously submitted by former Utah House District 21 Representative Sagers and the City of Grantsville.

As Utah's largest and longest-serving business association, the Salt Lake Chamber is passionate about the STR's primary goal of providing safe, efficient and environmentally sustainable freight movement and the distinct economic development opportunities it provides to the region. We respectfully request your full and fair consideration of the STR's application and merit-based recommendation to the Surface Transportation Board.

Sincerely,

Derek Miller
President & CEO
Salt Lake Chamber

^[1] A. Protopapas *et al.*, "Modal Comparison of Domestic Freight Transportation Effects on the General Public," *Transp. Res. Rec.* **2330**, 55 (2013). Accessed at https://rosap.ntl.bts.gov/view/dot/5800/dot_5800_DS1.pdf.