

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

EP 704 (Sub-No. 1)

EP 711 (Sub-No. 1)

November 16, 2016

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The Honorable Daniel R. Elliot, III
Chairman

The Surface Transportation Board
395 E. Street, SW
Washington, D.C. 20423

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OFFICE OF CHAIRMAN

Dear Chairman Elliot:

We are writing regarding a number of issues pending before the Surface Transportation Board (STB) that could affect the competitiveness of our private freight railroads.

The Staggers Rail Act of 1980 laid the base rules for a freight rail system that has provided transportation at fair rates and also allowed the rail industry to succeed, grow and invest in additional rail infrastructure which benefits shippers as much as the rail industry itself.

We believe that forcing freight railroads to open up their lines to other private competitors at below fair market rates could hinder freight railroads from reinvesting in improvements to their own infrastructure or delaying safety enhancements like Positive Train Control (PTC).

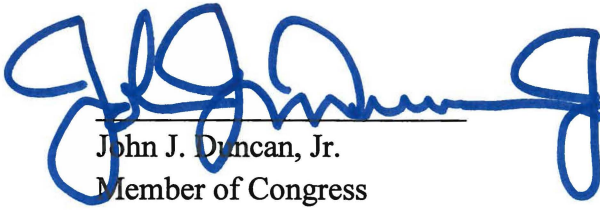
It could also potentially slow down the efficiency of delivering goods throughout the system that so many other industries rely on to maintain their own operations.

Additionally, we do not think the STB should give consideration to the re-regulation of certain commodities when no one representing any of these commodities has petitioned for the Board to do so. It seems overly burdensome and unnecessary.

Our freight rail service has grown and prospered for both the railroads and the users since the 1980's Staggers Act was passed. We hope the Board will avoid issuing new policies that will drive up costs for everyone and, in the end, hurt the working families of this Country the most.

Thank you for taking our comments into consideration. If you have any questions, feel free to contact us.

Yours Truly,



John J. Duncan, Jr.
Member of Congress



Chuck Fleischmann
Member of Congress