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November 16, 2016

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Mr. Daniel Elliott
Chairman
U.S. Surface Transportation Board
395 E Street SW
Washington, DC 20423

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Public Record

Mrs. Deb Miller
Vice Chairman

Mrs. Ann D. Begeman
Board Member

Dear Chairman Elliott, Vice Chairman Miller and Member Begeman:

As a state senator representing two counties in southeast Michigan, I write to express concern about the Surface Transportation Board's proposed railroad access regulations, which would undermine the economy by diminishing the strength of the rail industry.

As you know, Michigan's economy is improving and we have finally been able to dedicate more taxes into our crumbling road and bridge infrastructure. Decades of underinvestment created the problem and climbing out of that hole will take several more years and billions of dollars. Policies you are considering that would limit rail line owner incentives to re-invest in their infrastructure would harm the industry as well as drastically increase the amount of freight on our roads, creating even further setbacks to our recovery.

It is critical we have reliable, uninterrupted access to efficient freight transportation to ensure locally-made products are competitive nationally and globally, however, the proposed access regulations would compromise the efficiency of the national rail system and slow the overall movement of goods across the nation.

Businesses, especially small businesses, rely on swift, predictable shipping options to meet their customers' needs. These regulations have the potential to jumpstart a chain reaction that constricts business activity. This is not just discriminatory toward the railroads, it is also unfair to the businesses that are the backbone of the American economy. When our businesses suffer, so do our local communities surrounding them.

I urge the board to carefully consider the effects of these regulations and the impact they would have on businesses across the nation. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,