

Richard G. Verney
Chairman and Chief Executive Officer

245798

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Office of Proceedings
May 24, 2018
Part of
Public Record

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May 24, 2018

VIA ELECTRONIC FILING

Ms. Cynthia T. Brown
Chief, Section of Administration
Office of Proceedings
Surface Transportation Board
395 E Street, S.W.
Washington, DC 20423-0001

Re: **Docket No. AB 1256
Boston & Me Corp and Springfield Term. Rwy Co. –
Application for Adverse Discontinuance of Operating
Authority – Milford-Bennington RR
Co.**

Dear Ms. Brown and other interested parties:

I am the Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of Monadnock Paper Mills, Inc. ("Monadnock"). The Monadnock Paper Mill is located on the former Hillsboro Branch of the Boston and Maine Corporation, northwest of Wilton, New Hampshire.

Monadnock contributed to the replacement of the Lyndeboro, New Hampshire trestle in 1982 as an investment in the Hillsboro Branch to ensure continued common carrier rail service of pulp, chemicals, and other important commodities used in the production of paper at the Monadnock Mill. Monadnock's contribution was approximately \$130,000, equivalent to about 20% of the \$638,000 replacement cost. As I recall, the rest of the sum was contributed by the State of New Hampshire.

Nevertheless, in 1985, Boston & Maine abandoned the west end of the Hillsboro Branch, depriving Monadnock of common carrier rail service, despite Monadnock's substantial investment in rail assets. Due to the abandonment of the Hillsboro Branch in 1985, Monadnock was required to reconfigure its facilities to accept the delivery of commodities by commercial motor vehicle.

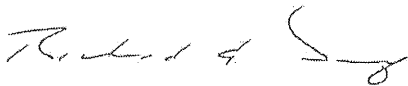
Given Monadnock's sustained interest in economical common-carrier service by rail, Monadnock has continued to contribute to improvements on the Hillsboro Branch after its acquisition by the State of New Hampshire. In 1995, Monadnock contributed \$50,000 to the rehabilitation of the state-owned Hillsboro Branch. In 2003, Monadnock contributed \$50,000 to a tie replacement program on the state-owned Hillsboro Branch.

Despite this continued, demonstrated interest and investment in common carrier service, Pan Am Railways has declined to provide a reasonable quotation and has never even solicited our interest regarding rail service over the Hillsboro Branch. Even if it did, the five mile per hour yard limit track on Pan Am's portion of the Hillsboro Branch east of Wilton makes it difficult for shippers to count on the timely delivery of commodities and goods. The recent derailment in Nashua similarly does not inspire confidence in Pan Am's commitment or operation of the Branch east of Wilton.

What has been clear to me since our earliest involvement in 1983 is that Pan Am (which I understand is the successor to Guilford Transportation Industries-held Boston & Maine) has never been interested in providing rail common carrier service over the Hillsboro Branch. The present convenience and necessity of shippers is not served by Pan Am's current service on its segment of the Hillsboro Branch, and will certainly not be improved by the addition of an interchange in Wilton.

I make the foregoing statements under penalty of perjury, and urge the Board to give weight to the interests of shippers and community members regarding the Milford to Wilton segment.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Richard G. Verney", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Richard G. Verney

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

The undersigned hereby certifies that on this 24th day of May, 2018, he caused a true and correct copy of the foregoing **Letter regarding the Boston & ME Corp and Springfield Term. Rwy. Co.—Application for Adverse Discontinuance of Operating Authority---Milford-Bennington RR Co.** to be electronically filed with the Surface Transportation Board and served up on the following Parties of Record via deposit in the United States Mail chute located at 29 North Wacker Drive, Chicago, Illinois 60606, with proper postage prepaid:

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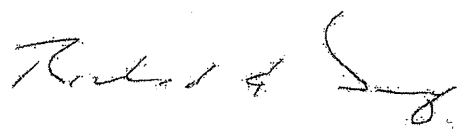
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By: 

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