

Newquist & Bergstrom

Wholesale Forest Products

February 23, 2000

Secretary
U.S. Surface Transportation Board
1925 K Street N.W.
Washington, D. C. 20423-0001



Dear Sir:

My company uses rail and truck transportation. Our annual rail volume is 200 cars. We use the Union Pacific Railroad and the Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railway Company primarily. Unfortunately, we seem to be moving more and more toward the trucking mode.

I support the STB's decision in the BNSF/CN docket to examine carefully the BNSF/CN proposed control application, including all of the effects it could have on the rail transportation industry. The board should seriously consider the effects that further mergers and consolidations in the rail industry will have on shippers.

Our company has experienced the effects of the service disruptions caused by rail mergers over the past five years, including the merger of Burlington Northern and Santa Fe. Shippers in the U.S. and Canada are still feeling the effects of the most recent changes in the East. While improvements in service are taking place, this has been a long, expensive and resource consuming process for our company. The railroads do not need further disruptions and distractions in providing service right now.

More mergers and consolidations are unnecessary now. The rail industry has recently shrunk to a half-dozen large railroads. This new structure and rapid advances in information technology offer the industry opportunities to improve their service without mergers. They should concentrate on pursuing cooperative initiatives to improve interchange service, projects to coordinate dispatching and operations in complex terminal areas and more effective utilization of their information technology to better serve all rail customers.

Thank you for your efforts and considerations in this very important matter.

Sincerely,

John B. Newquist
President

JBN:bh