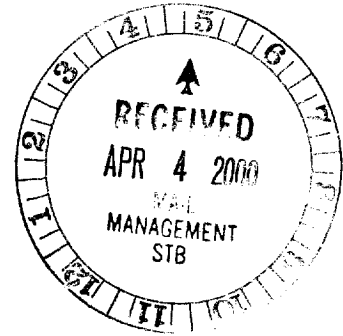


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March 28, 2000



The Honorable Linda Morgan
Chairman
U.S. Surface Transportation Board
1925 K Street, NW
Washington, D.C. 20412

Re: Section 5a Application no. 61, (Sub-No.6)
National Classification Committee – Agreement

Dear Chairman Morgan:

My name is Zane R. Johnsonbaugh. I am President of J-Line Inc., Altoona, PA. My family own this small trucking company. Our operating authority was issued by the Interstate Commerce Commission (ICC) at Docket No. MC-265565. We are a member of the National Motor Freight Traffic Association, Inc. (NMFTA), and a participating carrier in the National Motor Freight Classification (NMFC).

I have been employed in the trucking industry all my life. Prior to purchasing my own company, I was Director of Traffic and Pricing for Ward Trucking Corp., Altoona for over thirty-eight years. Ward is also a member of NMFTA and participates in the NMFC.

I have been a member of both the above groups since the early 1970's. I was Chairman of the National Classification Committee (NCC) 1985-1986 and Chairman of the NMFTA 1992-1993. For me to state that I am totally familiar with the classification activities of the carrier members of the NCC and the staff of NMFTA who perform the research and other classifications related duties at the NCC's is not an overstatement. I was personally involved during my term as Chairman of the NCC in '85-'86 in setting up our present system as required by the Interstate Commerce Commission at that time.

I am filing my personal comments in this proceeding because of my tremendous disappointment in the negative attitude shown throughout the STB's decision of February 11, 2000. I am very concerned about numerous assertions or conclusions which are completely unfounded and most unfair to the members of the NCC and NMFTA.

The February 11th decision shows the Board's total acceptance of the criticism, unsupported, of the NCC's procedures and certain decisions by shipper group members. At the same time, the Board does not recognize the evidence in the record which clearly support our (NCC) procedures. I am quite aware that a number of individual shippers,

shipper representatives, consultants, and former ICC Commissioners filed comments in the Board's proceeding in 1998, wherein they expressed their experience with the NCC's open and fair proceedings in a very positive manner. It's most unjust and unfair for the STB to ignore evidence which contradicts unsupported allegations in my opinion.

Our committee does not look at matters brought before us as decreases or increases in rates. We are not a rate making body. Our job is to classify commodities that move in interstate commerce. We look at density, stowability, handling and liability characteristics to make our determinations. Do not rely on unsupported assertions that we are biased one way or the other. We are not! Shipper participation has been encouraged in our process as long as I have been a member. Footnote 4, page 3 of the February decision refers to "proposals generated by NCC's staff". Again, you have the information wrong—proposals are generated by us, the member carriers. We instruct the staff what to do-not the other way around. These assertions are truly disappointing and make me wonder if the STB is an impartial group or if they are prone to believe everything certain shipper organizations tell them. As Sgt. Friday used to say "just the facts ma'am, just the facts!"

During my years on the committee (over 25), I can state unequivocally that the Board's belief that class increases predominately result in rate increases is misplaced. It's a myth. I know of many, many classification increases over the years which did not increase the rates charged my customers. Carriers operate in a market driven area which is such that some, or all, of our customers simply do not experience rate increases after classification changes that may have increased the rating on the customer's traffic.

I would like for my shippers to take advantage of the numerous opportunities available to them to participate in the NCC procedures, whether in our research projects or the presentation of their own proposals. There are, to my knowledge, no carrier or staff barriers to prohibit it. The decisions made on classification proposals are based solely on the record and the transportation characteristics of the product, consistent with the NCC guidelines and the terms and conditions set out in our Section 5a Agreement and the law. There is no bias against shippers.

Sincerely,


Zane R. Johnsonbaugh
President

cc: Parties of Record