



**AMERICAN SHORT LINE AND
REGIONAL RAILROAD ASSOCIATION**

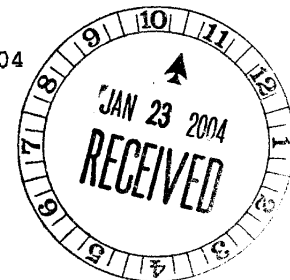
The Voice of America's Independent Railroads
Office of Proceedings

January 23, 2004

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BY HAND

Honorable Vernon A. Williams, Secretary
Surface Transportation Board
1925 K Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20423-0001



RE: FD No. 34054, Morristown & Erie Railway, Inc., Modified
Certificate - Petition of Five New Jersey Municipalities

Dear Mr. Williams:

Pursuant to the Board Rules of Practice, 49 CFR 1100.03, 1104.7, and 1104.13, the American Short Line Railroad Association ("ASLRRRA") seeks a one day extension to permit it to file its Reply on January 23, 2004, in response to the Petition to Reopen filed by the Five Municipalities in the above-captioned proceeding.

The ASLRRRA was unable to submit its comments in this proceeding until now because of administrative delays preparing comments and the need to coordinate with other parties in this proceeding. Nevertheless, the ASLRRRA did fax a copy of its letter reply to the Office of Proceedings late Thursday afternoon January 22, 2004, and will fax copies to counsel for other parties Friday morning. Because the ASLRRRA's comments are brief and there is no immediate action required to be taken by the Board in this proceeding, a short one day extension should not delay the proceedings or prejudice any party. Moreover, the ASLRRRA believes the Board and the public would benefit from the policy position it is articulating here. Finally, the Board's own rules require a liberal construction to secure a just, speedy, and inexpensive determination of the issues presented.

Accordingly, the ASLRRRA requests that the Board grant it a one day extension to file its Reply in this proceeding.

Respectfully yours,

Keith T. Borman
General Counsel

Cc: All parties

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