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December 21, 2004

VIA FACSIMILE: (202) 565-9004
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Mr. Vernon A. Williams, Secretary
Surface Transportation Board
1925 K Street, N.W.
Washington, D. C. 20423



Re: **Docket No. AB-167 (Sub-No. 1179X)**
Consolidated Rail Corporation
Discontinuance Exemption in Suffolk County, MA

Dear Mr. Williams:

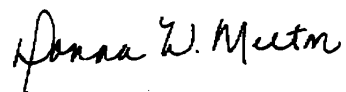
On July 31, 1997, Conrail filed a petition seeking an exemption under 49 U.S.C. 10502 from the prior approval requirements of 49 U.S.C. 10903 to discontinue service for approximately three years over 2,635 feet of the Boston Terminal Running Track ("Track 61"). The purpose of the temporary discontinuance was to allow for certain construction by the Massachusetts Turnpike Authority in connection with the South Boston Interchange portion of the Central Artery/Tunnel project. By decision served on November 17, 1997, the Board exempted the proposed discontinuance from the prior approval requirements of 49 U.S.C. 10903. The original exemption was scheduled to remain in effect until December 16, 2000. CSX Transportation, Inc. ("CSXT"), the current operator of this line, requested an extension of the discontinuance period that was granted and expired on December 31, 2003. On December 15, 2003, CSXT requested an additional extension of the expiration date of the exemption which was granted and which will expire on December 31, 2004.

As of the date of this letter, the construction on the Central Artery/Tunnel project is incomplete. As such CSXT must request a further extension until December 31, 2005, in order to allow for the completion of the construction. CSXT is agreeable to this extension as a result of an agreement between CSXT and the Turnpike Authority. In the event that the Turnpike Authority fails to abide by the terms of the agreement, however, CSXT reserves the right to reconsider this further extension.

Mr. Vernon A. Williams, Secretary
Surface Transportation Board
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Please feel free to contact my office if you have any questions.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Donna W. Mullen".