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February 4, 2005

Surface Transportation Board
1925 K Street, NW
Washington, DC 20423-0001

Attn: Mr. Vernon A. Williams
Secretary

Reference STB Ex Parte No. 656

Dear Mr. Williams,

Artcraft has been manufacturing lighting for over 50 years. A key and growing cost is freight.

We understand the Surface Transportation Board is evaluating the appropriateness of extending continue anti trust exemption for the National Classification Committee. We urge you to deny the continuance of this collective agreement.

We believe it inappropriate to continue the collective agreement activity of the National Classification Committee in today's deregulated economy. Freight costs should only be determined in the open market with agreements/contracts determined between individual shippers and truckers.

If there is some overriding reason why the NCC should continue, then it should be reorganized with its makeup 50% shippers and 50% truckers.

This is essential to the longer-term survival of the domestic lighting industry.

Sincerely,
ARTCRAFT OF MONTREAL LTD.
ARTCRAFT ELECTRIC LIMITED

Howard S. Bernstein
Vice President

HSB:sr

