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February 8, 2005

Mr. Vernon A. Williams
Secretary
Surface Transportation Board
1925 K Street, NW
Washington, DC 20423-0001

Reference: STB Ex Parte No. 656

Dear Mr. Williams:

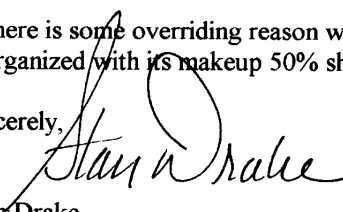
Our company is in the lighting manufacturing business. One of our largest costs is for freight.

We understand the Surface Transportation Board is evaluating the appropriateness of extending continued antitrust 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 determined between 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.

Sincerely,


Stan Drake
Vice President
Maxim Lighting International

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