



KYLE PITSOR

Vice President, Government Relations

February 18, 2005

Vernon A. Williams
Secretary to the Board
United States Surface Transportation Board
1925 K Street, NW
Washington, DC 20423-0001

Reference STB Ex Parte No. 656

Dear Mr. Williams:

The National Electrical Manufacturers Association (NEMA) understands that 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.

NEMA is the premier trade association representing the interests of domestic manufacturers of electrical products used in the generation, transmission, distribution, and end-use of electricity. Logistics professionals from eight leading NEMA luminaire product manufacturers face increasing freight costs. These are escalating costs and are a detriment to our overall competitive environment.

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.

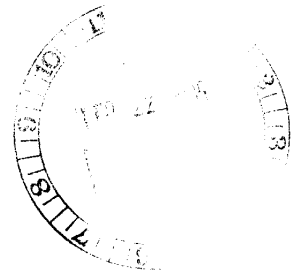
On behalf of the NEMA luminaire product manufacturers, I appreciate your attention to this matter, and look forward to an outcome that recognizes and embraces the competitive nature of freight shipment in U.S. interstate commerce.

Sincerely,

**National Electrical
Manufacturers Association**

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