



**United States
Department of
Agriculture**

Marketing and
Regulatory
Programs

Agricultural
Marketing
Service

Washington, DC
20250

OCT 27 2006

Mr. Vernon A. Williams
Office of the Secretary
Surface Transportation Board
Case Control Unit, Attn: STB Ex Parte No. 665
1925 K Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20423-0001

Dear Mr. Williams:

Please accept this letter as the Department of Agriculture's (USDA) intent to participate in the Surface Transportation Board's (STB) STB Ex Parte No. 665: Rail Transportation of Grain. Under Secretary Bruce Knight will submit and present written and verbal testimony on behalf of USDA. Under Secretary Knight respectfully requests to speak at 10:00 a.m. on November 2, 2006.

Topics to be covered in his testimony will address general concerns regarding U.S. rail transportation and competition, increasing rail rates for grain, and the interplay of American and Canadian wheat markets.

On behalf of USDA, please add the following name to the service list for this proceeding as a party of record: Barbara C. Robinson, Deputy Administrator, Transportation and Marketing, Agricultural Marketing Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, 1400 Independence Avenue, Room 1098-South Building, Washington, D.C. 20090-6456.

Sincerely,

Arthur L. Neal, Jr.
Acting Associate Deputy Administrator
Transportation and Marketing Programs





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Dear Mr. Williams:

The Department of Agriculture (USDA) requests that the Surface Transportation Board grant it leave to file comments regarding Ex Parte No. 665, Rail Transportation of Grain, by close of business Wednesday, November 1, 2006. The comments are due by close of business Monday, October 30, 2006. USDA is still reviewing its comments. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Arthur L. Neal, Jr.
Acting Associate Deputy Administrator
Transportation and Marketing Programs

