

January 11, 2007

By Electronic Filing

The Honorable Vernon A. Williams
Secretary
Surface Transportation Board
1925 K St. N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20423

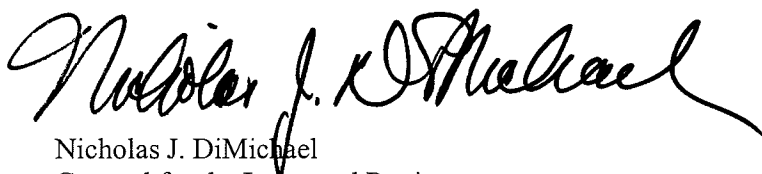
RE: Ex Parte 646 (Sub-No. 1), *Simplified Standards for Rail Rate Cases*

Dear Secretary Williams:

Pursuant to the decision of the Board served December 19, 2006, the "Interested Parties"¹ ask to participate in the hearing scheduled by the Board in this case for January 31, 2007. Appearing at the hearing on behalf of the Interested Parties will be Nicholas J. DiMichael and Andrew P. Goldstein. Also appearing at the hearing on behalf of the Interested Parties will be Mr. Thomas D. Crowley and Mr. Gerald W. Fauth III. Messrs. Crowley and Fauth are the cost consultants whose verified statements were included in the Interested Parties comments in this case.

The Interested Parties request a total of forty-five (45) minutes. Given the complexity and importance of the issues in this case; the large number of parties making up the Interested Parties; and the likely desirability of a free exchange with the members of the Board regarding the issues in this case, we believe that such a time allotment would be appropriate. The Interested Parties plan to split this requested time as follows: Messrs. DiMichael and Goldstein for a total of thirty (30) minutes, and Messrs. Crowley and Fauth for a total of fifteen (15) minutes.

Sincerely,



Nicholas J. DiMichael
Counsel for the Interested Parties

¹ American Chemistry Council, American Forest and Paper Association, American Soybean Association, Agricultural Retailers Association, Colorado Wheat Administrative Committee, Corn Refiners Association, The Fertilizer Institute, Glass Producers Transportation Council, Idaho Barley Commission, Idaho Wheat Commission, Institute of Scrap Recycling Industries, Iowa Soybean Association, Montana Wheat and Barley Committee, National Association of Wheat Growers, National Barley Growers Association, National Corn Growers Association, National Council of Farmers Cooperatives, National Farmers Union, National Grain and Feed Association, National Sorghum Producers, The National Industrial Transportation League, National Oilseed Processors Association, National Petrochemical & Refiners Association, Nebraska Wheat Board, North American Millers Association, North Dakota Grain Dealers Association, North Dakota Public Service Commission, North Dakota Wheat Commission, Oklahoma Wheat Commission, Paper and Forest Industry Transportation Committee, PPL EnergyPlus, LLC, South Dakota Wheat Commission, Texas Wheat Producers Board, USA Rice Federation, Washington Wheat Commission, Alliance for Rail Competition, Consumers United for Rail Equity and The Honorable Brian Schweitzer, Governor, State of Montana