



June 25, 2008

Surface Transportation Board
395 E Street S W
Washington D C 20423-0001

Subject Docket EP 677 1
Common Carrier Obligation of Railroads
Transportation of Hazardous Materials

Dear Committee Members,

TriCounty FS, Inc would like to offer comments on the Common Carrier Obligation of Railroads to transport Anhydrous Ammonia We are a Farmer Owned Cooperative retailing fertilizer products to around 1,000 farmer customers in Jersey, Greene, and Calhoun Counties in Illinois We currently receive 60 to 80 railcars of anhydrous ammonia per year We are adding some spur track capacity be able to receive up to 200 cars per year This is being done because the current ammonia infrastructure is strained beyond capacity Last fall we felt the full effects of what happens when terminals run low on ammonia The re-charge capabilities are just not there A lot of terminals receive ammonia by barge and rail

Global demand for food and fuel is at an all time high We have the perfect place in the world to grow corn, the right weather, soils, and transportation infrastructure To continue to lead the world in corn production, we must have a nitrogen infrastructure that is dependable (timely) and efficient (cost effective) To reach maximum yields, corn must be planted at the optimum time To plant at the optimum time – nitrogen must be applied prior to planting With the large efficient farms of the mid-west, fertilization must take place during the fall season or early spring season There simply is not enough terminal storage to handle both seasons unless the weather is absolutely perfect This is normally not the case Without rail delivered ammonia figured into an already peaked out delivery system – we will have logistics problems that are insurmountable

This nation needs corn It is a key component of our food chain and an important part of our renewable fuel efforts to help with our energy crisis From a food and fuel standpoint, this nation has much to loose if we cannot deliver the yield producing nitrogen to the corn fields in a timely manner It's like disrupting the flow of crude oil to a refinery Corn production needs nitrogen, just as crude oil is needed to produce gasoline and diesel fuel

We encourage the Committee to continue the Common Carrier Obligation of Railroads to transport Anhydrous Ammonia Without this, our business and customers will be greatly affected

Sincerely,
Dave Lewis
General Manager
TriCounty FS, Inc