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July 7, 2008

Surface Transportation Board
c/o Charles D. Nottingham, Chairman
Attn: STB ExParte 677 *Sub 1*
3958 Street, SW
Washington, DC 20423-0001

RE: Public Hearing Regarding the Common Carrier Obligation of the Railroads

Mr. Nottingham and Members of the Board:

I am the president of Trical, Inc., a company in California that receives by rail various soil, structural and commodity fumigants that are used in American Agriculture, as well as other segments of American industry. We and our affiliated companies receive, store, formulate and distribute these products throughout the United States, as well as internationally. Also, we perform soil fumigation for American farmers and provide fumigants to other applicators.

I write to you, in response to the hearing on the obligation of railroad common carriers to provide *surface transportation of hazardous materials, especially fertilizers and pesticides*, which are used in agriculture and other segments of American industry. I understand that you have focused your current attention on chlorine and anhydrous ammonia.

Regarding the transportation of such materials, tank cars are much less prone to hijacking than tanker trucks, because they are limited in their movement to specific routes on rail lines and can be located and followed easily, if ever hijacked. They can not be moved off of their tracks and moved to sensitive location where their contents could be released and cause great harm. Tanker trucks, on the other hand, can be intercepted easily and moved freely along any route that a hijacker might want to take, can be hidden easily, and, moved to sensitive locations where their contents could be released to do great harm.

If necessary, to avoid high populations and sensitive sites, tank cars can be routed specifically to avoid such locations and would not be prone to re-routing by a hijacker. Tanker trucks, on the other hand, can be intercepted easily and driven quickly to a high impact location where their contents could be used to cause great damage.

American farmers operate in a global economy and any increases in their operating costs affect their ability to compete internationally. The recent, large increase in fuel costs have added an

immense burden on American farmers that is hurting them in global markets. According to the USDA, after reaching a high of \$27.3 Billion dollars in 1996, the US Agricultural Trade Balance declined to \$4.6 Billion by 2006. Preliminary USDA statistics report that it bounced back to \$11.9 Billion in 2007. However, recent fuel price increases and any other unusual cost increases, such as eliminating the rail transportation of fertilizers and pesticides, especially those that are "toxic by inhalation", will have a further depressing effect on it. This would be an undesirable economic, as well as food security, effect on the American economy and people.

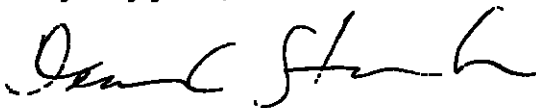
In contradiction to the railroads' claim that the transportation of hazardous materials is an "unreasonable request", they have been providing this service for many years without prior complaint. The fact that the American government and people are faced now with unusual terrorist threats and a declining agriculture trade balance should be ample reason for the railroads to step in and support American agriculture. Rail transportation of hazardous materials is the safest and most economical method of transportation, and, the regional fertilizer and pesticide warehouses and related facilities are set up for rail transportation. Highway transportation is not an acceptable alternative to this system.

Also, if the STB does side with the railroads in regard to their claim that the transportation of materials that are toxic by inhalation is an "unreasonable request", then, it will have established a precedent for the railroads to deny transportation to other hazardous materials, under the same standard. This can not be allowed to happen, because the impact on the American economy would be drastic.

Instead of allowing the railroads to deny service to transporters of such materials, it would be better to require the railroads to continue to service such products and to provide adequate STB oversight to ensure that they do so.

Thank you for considering my input.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dean C. Storkan", written in a cursive style.

Dean C. Storkan, President