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THEODORE R. KULONGOSKI
GOVERNOR

July 23, 2008

The Honorable Anne K. Quinlan
Acting Secretary
Surface Transportation Board
395 E St. SW
Washington, DC 20423

Re: Docket No. AB-515 (Sub-No. 2X), *Central Oregon & Pacific Railroad, Inc - Abandonment and Discontinuance - in Coos, Douglas, and Lane Counties, OR (Coquille to Vaughn)*

Dear Secretary Quinlan:

As Governor of Oregon, I have taken a keen interest in the Abandonment Application filed on July 14, 2008, by the Central Oregon & Pacific Railroad (CORP) for the Coos Bay line. I have concerns with the proposed abandonment and I request that the Surface Transportation Board hold a public hearing in Oregon. A possible location for this hearing could be Eugene, which has offered to host the hearing.

As you know, a railroad may abandon or discontinue service on a rail line only upon authorization of the Surface Transportation Board (Board). As you deliberate whether to authorize an abandonment or discontinuance of service, the Board must evaluate the inconvenience that might be suffered by shippers and affected communities, as well as all of the ancillary adverse impacts of that abandonment. In order for the Board to best assess these impacts, a hearing in Oregon is essential.

This topic has been followed by citizens of every corner of Oregon and its impact has been felt all over the state. For instance, companies on Oregon's North Coast, hundreds of miles from the CORP line, have been affected by this disruption of rail service as rail cars to carry their products are no longer available.

During the testimony before the Board in April of this year, three members of the Oregon delegation participated in the hearing. It was noted by one Board member that it was extremely rare for members of Congress to appear before the Board. I believe that this demonstrates the intense public interest in Oregon on this matter and is further evidence on why it would be so important for Oregonians to be able to testify in person on the affect of this abandonment.

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I understand that granting such oral hearings is rare, though in the Wisconsin Central case a public hearing was held in Wisconsin. In that case, there were only 206 carloads per year on the line, as opposed to nearly 6,000 annual carloads on the Coos Bay line.

The State of Oregon is willing to assist the Board in any way possible in order to facilitate a hearing in Oregon. Giving Oregonians the chance to be heard on an issue of such economic importance is absolutely critical. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Chris Warner at 503-986-3301. I look forward to the Board's willingness to hear in person the concerns of the citizens of Oregon.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Theodore R. Kulongoski". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "T" and "K".

THEODORE R. KULONGOSKI
Governor

GTK ODOT/sh