

November 3, 2014



Ms. Cynthia Brown
Chief, Section of Administration, Office of Proceedings
Surface Transportation Board
395 E Street, S.W.
Washington, DC 20423-0111

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Dear Ms. Brown:

SUBJECT: Docket No. EP 724. United States Rail Service Issues

Consumers United for Rail Equity (CURE) supports the Petition filed on October 22, 2014, by the Western Coal Traffic League (WCTL) in the Surface Transportation Board (STB) Docket No. EP 724. CURE's members who ship coal and other commodities on the Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) railroad have continued to see serious delivery shortfalls. As the STB is well aware these shortfalls have not been limited to coal deliveries. The delivery of grain, fertilizer and many other important products has been affected over the past year and continues.

The STB took steps to make sure that some of the agricultural needs were met earlier this year and we commend the STB for doing so. However, no such action has been taken with respect to the delivery of coal. Many coal producers and coal customers who depend upon BNSF to transport coal from the mines to the power plants have been hurt by BNSF's failure to deliver the amount of coal they had agreed to deliver. In their Petition, WCTL highlights the special need for adequate coal supplies for utilities that use a vast amount of coal in the winter. Without adequate stockpiles of coal on hand prior to the onset of severe winter weather the risk of widespread outages of electricity is greatly increased. This past weekend, the state of Maine and the Carolinas experienced the first significant snow event.

CURE and its members ask the STB to take this threat to the reliability of our electrical system seriously and take action to do what you can to help mitigate this risk. While every shipper who depends on the railroads to transport their product or commodity deserves to be treated fairly and should be able to expect reliable delivery by the railroads, not every product or commodity is as critical to the reliability of our electrical supply system as is coal. CURE asks the STB to recognize this and order the railroads to do the same.

CURE and its members thank you for taking this first step to address the problem with coal deliveries. We urge you to do everything in your power to help reduce the risk of fuel shortages this winter and to maintain the reliability of our critical electrical supply system.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Steve Sharp".

Steve Sharp
President of CURE