

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-2507

August 1, 2012

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Mr. Daniel R. Elliott, Chairman
Surface Transportation Board
395 E Street SW
Washington, DC 20423

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Subject: STB Docket No. FD 35654

Dear Chairman Elliott:

I am writing concerning the proposed acquisition of RailAmerica, Inc. by Genesee & Wyoming, Inc. (G&W). RailAmerica operates the Missouri & Northern Arkansas Railroad headquartered in Carthage, Missouri. They are a vital connection for many of our farmers and manufacturers which would otherwise be cut off from the national railroad network. I am writing to support this transaction and respectfully request that the Board review the matter in the most expeditious manner possible.

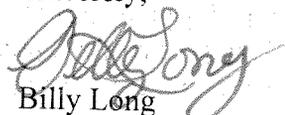
While there are no G&W short lines currently in Missouri, I have come to know the company by reputation given my history of work in support of America's small freight railroads. I support the G&W acquisition for a number of reasons. First, G&W has a proven track record of acquiring short lines, investing in infrastructure and developing long term growth opportunities. Their company began as a short line in 1899 and has stayed true to its small railroad roots. I believe that this acquisition will be beneficial to the current employees and customers of RailAmerica and create more jobs which our economy truly needs.

I do not support railroads because they are railroads. I support railroads because they are an effective way to move Missouri's raw materials and manufactured goods to market. Like RailAmerica today, G&W's business model depends on each of its short lines operating as local railroads with local managers who have decision-making authority over their local rail operations. That is the strength of the short line industry nationally and this acquisition will build upon that tradition. Local railroading is critical to maintain quality customer service and G&W's track record in this regard is commendable.

I support this transaction and I hope the STB will deal with it on an expedited basis. A lengthy approval process will bring uncertainty to farmers and rail customers which could make it difficult for RailAmerica to plan for future capital investment which is critical in the short line and regional railroad industry.

I appreciate your consideration of my views on the matter.

Sincerely,


Billy Long
Member of Congress