

STB VOTING CONFERENCE
December 13, 2004
10:00 a.m., Board Hearing Room

CHAIRMAN NOBER'S OPENING STATEMENT:

I want to thank you all for coming to this voting conference. As you can tell from the docket, we have quite a few cases before us today. I note that the staff has put in a lot of time and effort into the preparation for this voting conference and I want to thank them for all their hard work. I also want to thank my fellow commissioners for their cooperation in preparing for this voting conference.

This is the last voting conference of 2004 and it has been quite an active year. One of the highlights of this year was welcoming our two new commissioners. As a result of once again having a full Board, we have sought to work off the back log of cases. We have decided two rate cases and five rate case reconsiderations this year. Today we will decide a rate case reopening bringing our total for the year to six. We decided the Conrail Oversight matter and approved two mergers, Canadian National-Great Lakes Transportation and Kansas City Southern-Texas Mexican Railway. We also had three rate case arguments, and hearings addressing small rate cases, abandonments, motor carriers, Conrail oversight, the CN-GLT merger, and KCS-Tex Mex merger. We also visited Mexico and hosted a Canadian delegation to discuss transportation issues common to our countries, and we went on a site visit to the Powder River Basin. I would like to thank my fellow commissioners for their cooperation and assistance in these matters, and the Board staff for all their hard work in these many areas.

Let me now turn to my fellow commissioners for any opening statement they may have before turning to the matters at hand.