

SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BOARD

DECISION

STB Ex Parte No. 575

REVIEW OF RAIL ACCESS AND COMPETITION ISSUES
– RENEWED PETITION OF THE WESTERN COAL TRAFFIC LEAGUE –

Decided: April 8, 2005

By petition filed on March 21, 2005, the Western Coal Traffic League (WCTL) has renewed its 1998 request that the Board initiate a rulemaking proceeding designed to limit the ability of larger railroads to maintain contractual barriers restricting the ability of short line railroads to interchange traffic with connecting carriers that may compete with the larger railroads. WCTL's original petition in this matter was held in abeyance pending further experience under a privately negotiated settlement addressing various competitive issues. Review of Rail Access and Competition Issues, STB Ex Parte No. 575 (STB served Mar. 2, 1999).

By motion filed on April 7, 2005, the Association of American Railroads (AAR) and the American Short Line and Regional Railroad Association (ASLRRA) jointly request an extension of 20 days, until May 2, 2005, of the deadline to file a reply to WCTL's renewed petition. They maintain that they need more time "to adequately address the issues within their respective organizations and prepare appropriate responses" and that no interested party will be prejudiced by the delay. AAR and ASLRRA state that WCTL does not object to the extension.

The request for an extension appears reasonable and will be granted. The extension will also apply to any other persons who may be interested in filing a reply.

It is ordered:

1. The deadline for filing replies to WCTL's petition is extended until May 2, 2005.

2. This decision is effective on its date of service.

By the Board, Vernon A. Williams, Secretary.

Vernon A. Williams
Secretary