



**U.S. Department of
Transportation**
Office of the Secretary
of Transportation

General Counsel

1200 New Jersey Avenue, S.E.
Washington, D.C. 20590

March 2, 2015

237843

FILED ELECTRONICALLY

Ms. Cynthia Brown
Chief of the Section of Administration, Office of Proceedings
Surface Transportation Board
395 E Street, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20423

ENTERED
Office of Proceedings
March 2, 2015
Part of
Public Record

**Re: No. EP 724 (Sub-No. 4)
United States Rail Service Issues, Performance Data Reporting
Opening Comments of the United States Department of Transportation**

Dear Ms. Brown:

Attached please find the Opening Comments of the United States Department of Transportation in this matter. Thank you for your assistance, and please feel free to contact me with any questions.

Respectfully,

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**BEFORE THE
SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BOARD**

WASHINGTON, D.C.

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United States Rail Service Issues)	
Performance Data Reporting)	No. EP 724 (Sub-No. 4)
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**OPENING COMMENTS OF THE
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**

Pursuant to the Board's Decision of December 30, 2014, the United States Department of Transportation (Department or DOT) and the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA), an operating administration of DOT, respectfully submit their opening comments in this matter. The Department is pleased to have the opportunity to consider the issues raised in this proceeding.

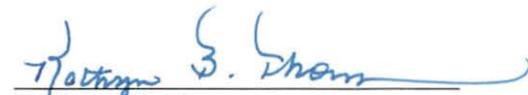
DOT appreciates the Board's continued attention to the rail industry's performance. In light of the importance of the issues that the Board has been considering in connection with freight service, then-FRA Administrator Joseph Szabo appeared before the Board to offer oral testimony at the hearing held in Washington, D.C., on April 10, 2014. At the hearing, Administrator Szabo explained the potential safety concerns that can result from rail delays, as well as the impact of freight delays upon passenger rail service.

In this proceeding, the Board is proposing to establish new regulations for Class I railroads and the Chicago Transportation Coordination Office to report certain service performance metrics on a weekly basis. The Department is interested in hearing the views of

railroads, shippers, and other interested parties on the matters raised in the Board's proposal. After consideration of those views and any pertinent data, the Department may offer further remarks at a later stage of this proceeding if appropriate.

March 2, 2015

Respectfully submitted,


Kathryn B. Thomson
General Counsel