

**SOUTHWESTERN MICHIGAN
ECONOMIC GROWTH ALLIANCE, INC.**

April 4, 2011

229160

The Honorable Daniel R. Elliot, III
Chairman, Surface Transportation Board
395 E. Street, SW, Suite 1220
Washington, DC 20423-0001

EP 705

Dear Chairman Elliot:

As an economic development organization in Michigan, the Southwestern Michigan Economic Growth Alliance fully recognizes the need for a strong freight railroad network, not only in our state/region, but across the nation.

As America is beginning to see positive signs indicating the easing of this most recent recessionary period, we do not need to reverse progress by damaging the ability of the rail industry to reinvest and continue to provide strong service. The ability to move freight via rail is an extremely important part of the transportation system of the Midwest and enables companies of all sizes to have the opportunity to transport certain goods in the most energy and cost efficient way.

The Southwestern Michigan Economic Growth Alliance supports a healthy freight rail network that encourages reinvestment by the rail industry, supports job growth and continued economic recovery.

We oppose any policy or regulatory changes that would hinder the freight railroads' ability to continue investing billions of dollars annually in private capital to grow and modernize the nation's rail infrastructure. We respectfully request that no regulatory or policy changes be pursued at this time by the STB. We need to maintain the strong and well-balanced regulatory regime we have in place today.

Thank you for your consideration of our position.

Sincerely,



Shelley Klug, Executive Director

cc: Pete Fontana, Norfolk Southern Industrial