

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

March 22, 2011

The Honorable Dan Elliot
Chairman
Surface Transportation Board
395 E Street, SW
Suite 1220
Washington, DC 20423-0001

Dear Chairman Elliot:

We are writing to express our support for a strong freight railroad network in our state of Georgia and across the nation.

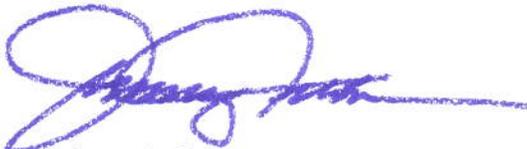
Freight railroads are a vital industry for Georgia. As you know, our state is served by 22 railroads including two Class I operators, CSX and Norfolk Southern. These railroads operate over more than 4,700 miles of track, employ more than 7,200 Georgians, account for more than \$480 million in annual payroll, and serve nearly 2,000 customers.

Because of their significant positive impact on the state's economy, and the increasing growth opportunities for the industry, we believe that any attempts to re-regulate railroads will have an extremely negative impact on Georgia. North America's freight railroads have announced plans to invest more than \$12 billion in 2011 to enhance and maintain their infrastructure. As you know each \$1 billion spent on rail infrastructure supports 20,000 jobs. Under the current, and reasonable, regulatory environment U.S. freight railroads are creating jobs and improving their infrastructure in Georgia and throughout the nation.

Freight rail is a capital intensive industry, and it is imperative that continued reinvestment be encouraged. With Georgia and so many other states under pressure to expand the economy and create jobs, any action by the Surface Transportation Board to adopt policies that would discourage private investment would be counterproductive.

We appreciate your consideration of our views, and stand ready to work with you and the Board to ensure a healthy freight rail network that continues to provide a true public benefit to our nation. Should you or your staff have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us or Michael Quiello (Isakson) and Sarah Bell (Chambliss) in our offices.

Sincerely,



Johnny Isakson
United States Senator



Saxby Chambliss
United States Senator