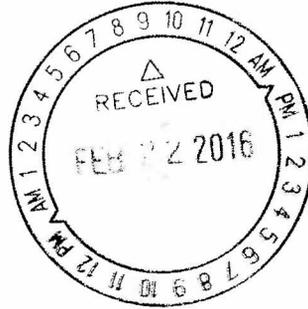




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February 4, 2016

Surface Transportation Board,
Attn: Docket No. EP 526 (Sub-No. 7)
395 E Street, S.W.
Washington, DC 20423-0001



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Re: Nomination to STB's RSTAC Committee

This letter is in support of the nomination of George Avery Grimes, PE, PhD, of Patriot Rail Company, L.L.C. ('Patriot Rail') for the short line railroad vacancy for the Railroad-Shipper Transportation Advisory Council ('RSTAC').

Avery is an experienced rail executive having served in senior positions with short lines, commuter railroads and Class 1 railroads. He represents Patriot Rail on BNSF's Shortline Caucus and Union Pacific Shortline Advisory Group ('SLAG'). He serves as Chair of UP's SLAG, a position that he was elected to by the many shortlines that serve UP.

I personally know Avery from his work at Metra (Chicago Commuter Rail) when he assisted a new CEO (Alex Clifford) when Metra faced a period of crisis. He was instrumental in helping this organization move beyond that crisis.

Avery is an excellent candidate. He continues to serve as Chair of the Transportation Research Board's Committee on Freight Rail Transportation (AR040), a coalition of Class 1 and shortline railroads, State DOTs representatives, academia, and national organizations which sponsors research and discussion of issues facing the rail industry today.

He has testified before the Board (2009) on new economic theories regarding rail investment and is knowledgeable of rail regulatory issues, rail economics and operations. He has served as an expert witness before the Board representing both shippers and railroads.

I believe that he would be an excellent choice to fill the short line vacancy on the RSTAC as his experience and temperament make him an excellent candidate.

Thank you for your consideration of my letter of support for Dr. Grimes.


Don Orseno
Executive Director/CEO