



Senator Frank LaRose
27th Ohio Senate District
*Serving Wayne and portions of
Summit & Stark Counties*

Committees:
Transportation, Commerce and Labor, *Chair*
Agriculture
Education
Finance - Workforce Subcommittee
Financial Institutions
Government Oversight and Reform
Insurance
State and Local Government
Ways and Means
Joint Committee on Agency Rule Review

19 October 2016

Mr. Daniel Elliott
Chairman
U.S. Surface Transportation Board
395 E Street SW
Washington, DC 20423

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Office of Proceedings
October 27, 2016
Part of
Public Record

Mrs. Deb Miller
Vice Chairman
U.S. Surface Transportation Board
395 E Street SW
Washington, DC 20423

Docket No. EP 711 (Sub No. 1)

Mrs. Ann D. Begeman
Board Member
U.S. Surface Transportation Board
395 E Street SW
Washington, DC 20423

OFFICE OF PROCEEDINGS
2016 OCT 27 PM 9:27

Dear Chairman Elliott, Vice Chairman Miller and Member Begeman:

I represent communities in northeast Ohio, specifically portions of Summit and Stark Counties and all of Wayne County. I am writing to convey my concern about the Surface Transportation Board's proposed railroad access regulations, which would undermine the resilience of Ohio's economy and our nation's economy by diminishing the strength of the rail industry.

The heart of our nation's freight rail system runs through the Buckeye State. With the fourth largest freight rail infrastructure in the nation, Ohio's role as a cargo transportation hub is a major driver of the state's economy. Across Ohio, railroads are a crucial component in transporting almost 144 million tons of cargo that originate or terminate in the state every year. They also employ thousands of Ohioans in well-paid, community sustaining jobs.

Presently, Ohio manufacturers and farmers have access to some of the greatest logistical options and efficiencies in the nation – and their ability to continue to access affordable, efficient freight rail transportation is vital. It is critically important that businesses have reliable and

uninterrupted access to efficient freight transportation to ensure products are able to compete nationally and globally.

The proposed regulations, which would require railroads to provide their competitors with access to their rail lines, would compromise the efficiency of the national rail system and slow the overall movement of goods across the nation.

Ohio businesses, especially small businesses, rely on swift, predictable shipping options to meet their customers' requirements. By recommending that railroads comply with these regulations, the STB is likely to jumpstart a chain reaction that constricts business activity. This is unfair to the businesses, small and large, that form the backbone of our economy. These regulations would impede the efficient flow of commodities and chill railroad's investment in a highly effective freight rail network, causing a disastrous impact on a state like Ohio. Without a well-maintained rail network to rely on, Ohio businesses are less likely to find new customers, hire new workers, or invest in their facilities.

I urge the board to carefully consider the potentially disruptive effects of these proposed regulations and the impact they would have on businesses in Ohio and across the nation. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



Senator Frank LaRose
Ohio State Senator
27th Senate District