

**SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BOARD**

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**STB Ex Parte No. 729**

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**REPLY COMMENTS OF NORFOLK SOUTHERN RAILWAY COMPANY  
ON THE ADVANCE NOTICE OF PROPOSED RULEMAKING  
CONCERNING OFFERS OF FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE**

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*Counsel for Norfolk Southern Railway Co.*

**March 14, 2016**

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Norfolk Southern Railway Company (“NS”) appreciates the Board’s interest in improving the Offer of Financial Assistance process so that the limited resources of all parties involved in the process may be spent more efficiently. NS joins in support of the reply comments filed by the Association of American Railroads.

In further response to the filing made by the Military Surface Deployment and Distribution Command of the Department of the Army (“Army”), NS acknowledges the potential importance that the national rail system plays in the nation’s defense strategy. Should NS propose to abandon or discontinue a particular rail line that could negatively impact the national defense strategy, NS would be willing to try to mutually resolve the Army’s concerns in a way that protects the nation’s and NS’s interests.

Respectfully submitted,



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