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May 28, 2015

The Honorable Cynthia T. Brown  
Chief, Section of Administration  
Surface Transportation Board  
395 E Street, NW Washington DC 20423-0001

RE: Ex Parte No. 665-1: Rail Transportation of Grain, Rate Regulation Review

Dear Ms. Brown:

This letter expresses the National Academy of Sciences' (NAS) intent to participate in the June 10, 2015 public hearing for Ex Parte 665-1: Rail Transportation of Grain, Rate Regulation Review. Dr. Richard Schmalensee, Dean Emeritus, MIT Sloan School of Management, will present on behalf of the NAS Committee for a Study of Freight Rail Transportation and Regulation. The study was sponsored by the U.S. Department of Transportation and Federal Railroad Administration in fulfillment of Section 9007, Public Law 109-59.

Section 9007 requests that the Transportation Research Board (TRB) of the NAS conduct

“a comprehensive study of the Nation’s railroad transportation system since the enactment of the Staggers Rail Act of 1980. The study shall address and make recommendations on—(1) the performance of the Nation’s major railroads regarding service levels, service quality, and rates; (2) the projected demand for freight transportation over the next two decades and the constraints limiting the railroads’ ability to meet that demand; (3) the effectiveness of public policy in balancing the need for railroads to earn adequate returns with those of shippers for reasonable rates and adequate service; and (4) the future role of the Surface Transportation Board in regulating railroad rates, service levels, and the railroads’ common carrier obligations, particularly as railroads may become revenue adequate.”

Dean Schmalensee will present study findings and recommendations pertaining to the subject matter of the proceeding. Because the study committee’s final report is scheduled to be publicly released the morning of June 10, 2015, we request a presentation time as early in the afternoon as possible.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Thomas R. Menzies, Jr." The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the typed name and title.

Thomas R. Menzies, Jr.  
Senior Program Officer and Study Director  
Transportation Research Board  
National Academy of Sciences  
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