



# MANUFACTURE Alabama!

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April 8, 2011

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Ms. Cynthia Brown  
Chief, Section of Administration  
Office of Proceedings  
Surface Transportation Board  
395 E Street, S.W.  
Washington, D.C 20423-0001

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**Re: Ex Parte No. 705 Competition in the Railroad Industry**

Dear Ms. Brown:

On behalf of Manufacture Alabama, I want to commend the Surface Transportation Board for initiating this proceeding and reviewing the current state of competition in the railroad industry.

Manufacture Alabama is Alabama's only trade association dedicated exclusively to the competitive, legislative, regulatory and operational interests and needs of manufacturers and their partner industries and businesses. Manufacture Alabama represents hundreds of companies in a wide range of industries that share common interests and goals and that face common competitive challenges in today's tough global marketplace. Some of our members are among the nation's largest, most recognized corporations. Many are mid-sized or small family-owned manufacturers or manufacturing suppliers and vendors. All of them are vital parts of a manufacturing base crucial to Alabama's economy and job base.

Many of our member companies depend on Class I freight railroads to deliver their goods to customers, and most of our members are suffering from exorbitant rates and unreliable service from the railroads on a daily basis. The current rail regulatory program denies access to competition for many American rail customers, including manufacturers. Our members believe this lack of competition has resulted in higher rates and inefficient service. Manufacturers compete in a global marketplace and the rates manufacturers are being charged by freight railroads are putting American manufacturers at a severe competitive disadvantage.

Manufacture Alabama is supportive of this proceeding and believes it is long overdue. We look forward to the Board's careful review and thank you for considering our comments.

Respectfully submitted,

George N. Clark  
President  
Manufacture Alabama

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