

Ms. Cynthia T. Brown
Chief, Section of Administration
Office of Proceedings
Surface Transportation Board
395 E Street, SW
Washington, D.C. 20423

EP 705

230025

Dear Ms. Brown:

I am writing to urge the Surface Transportation Board to make a finding that there is a profound lack of rail-to-rail competition in the national rail system. The STB should change its policies to enable increased rail-to-rail competition.

Currently, anti-competitive practices within the railroad industry have driven costs up on my monthly electric bill. This is the fact that since railroad tracks are owned & tightly controlled as to who can use them, railroads are simply a monopoly in areas where they have their tracks. Any other business would be forced to sell off part of the business to eliminate the monopoly but due to nature of railroads needing tracks, this is not possible. Therefore the STB should control rates as not only does high rail rates raise electricity costs for coal-fired generation, it also raises the cost of ethanol for gasoline, syn-diesel, and grain products. The STB can fix this problem.

Rural-based business and agriculture rely on affordable electricity. Increased rail competition will help maintain affordable electric rates in rural America and will improve economic opportunities for rural communities like mine.

Increased rail competition will also increase the revenues of American agriculture by improving the ability of producers and manufacturers to ship their products affordably, thus improving exports, creating jobs and improving the standard of living in rural communities.

The Surface Transportation Board has an opportunity to make a positive difference and help improve our economy. The comments that the STB has received include numerous examples of the lack of adequate competition in the railroad industry. I hope the STB will find that there is inadequate competition in the railroad industry and will then revise their policies to enhance rail-to-rail competition in order to help preserve affordable electricity and good jobs throughout America.

Thank you,
C.A. Chet Lamb
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