

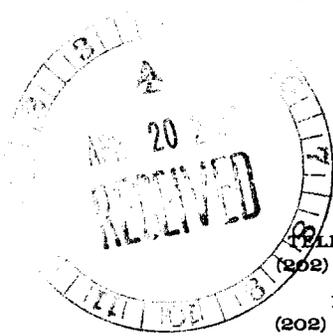
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April 20, 2005

VIA HAND DELIVERY

Honorable Vernon A. Williams
Secretary
Surface Transportation Board
1925 K Street, N.W., Room 711
Washington, D.C. 20423

ENTERED
Office of Proceedings
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Part of
Public Record

Re: Ex Parte No. 657, Rail Rate Challenges Under
the Stand-Alone Cost Methodology

Dear Secretary Williams:

This letter constitutes the Joint Comments of Western Fuels Association, Inc. ("WFA") and Basin Electric Power Cooperative, Inc. ("Basin Electric") in the above-referenced proceeding. WFA and Basin Electric are also the co-complainants in STB Docket No. 42088, Western Fuels Association, Inc. and Basin Electric Power Cooperative, Inc. v. BNSF Railway Company. Docket No. 42088 is a pending maximum rate case.

The Board's February 16, 2005 notice states the purpose of the Ex Parte No. 657 proceeding is to provide a forum for interested persons to discuss stand-alone cost ("SAC") issues but "is not intended to offer a forum for discussion of pending cases...." Id. at 1-2. Yesterday, WFA and Basin Electric filed their opening evidence in Docket No. 42088. Therein, WFA and Basin Electric invoke the Board's SAC constraint. WFA's and Basin Electric's opening evidence contains a detailed discussion of SAC issues.

WFA and Basin Electric agree with the Board that the Ex Parte No. 657 proceeding is not the proper forum to "discuss[] pending cases." Accordingly, in the instant proceeding, WFA and Basin Electric simply emphasize that they have an obvious and substantial interest in the fair application of the SAC test in their pending rate case.

Honorable Vernon A. Williams
April 20, 2005
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Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John H. LeSeur". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

John H. LeSeur
An Attorney for
WFA and Basin Electric

JHL:cef