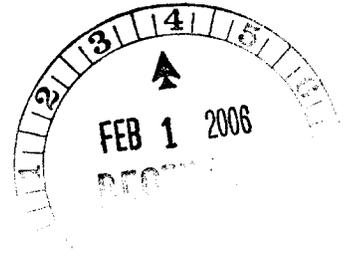


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February 1, 2006

Hon. Vernon A. Williams
Secretary
Surface Transportation Board
1925 K Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20423-0001

**RE: Ex Parte No. 647, Class Exemption for Expedited
Abandonment Procedure for Class II and Class III
Railroads**

Dear Secretary Williams:

I am writing on behalf of the Class II and III short line railroads my firm represents. One or more of my clients desire to participate in the proceeding commenced by the Advance Notice of Proposed Rulemaking served by the Surface Transportation Board on January 19, 2006.

Please date stamp and return one copy of this letter. If you have any questions, please call or email me.

Sincerely yours,

John D. Heffner