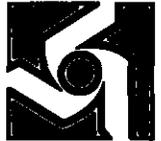


**BASIN ELECTRIC  
POWER COOPERATIVE**

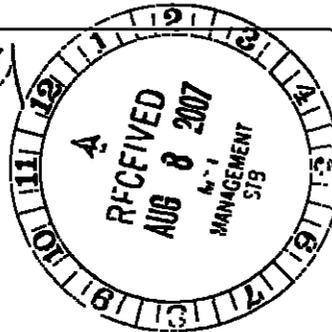
111 EAST INTERSTATE AVENUE  
SPRINGFIELD, MISSOURI 65804-3801  
PHONE 417-832-2141  
FAX 417-832-10330



August 2, 2007

The Honorable Vernon A. Williams  
Secretary  
Surface Transportation Board  
Attn: SIB Ex Parte No. 670  
395 E Street, SW  
Washington, DC 20423-0001

219979



Re Ex Parte No. 670. *Establishment of the Rail Energy Transportation Advisory Committee*

Dear Secretary Williams

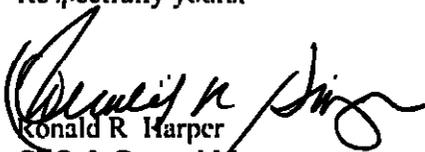
The purpose of this letter is to nominate and recommend Duane L. Richards to serve as a member of the Rail Energy Transportation Advisory Committee (RETAC) to be established by the Surface Transportation Board (Board) as announced in the Board's recent decision of July 17, 2007.

The Board is establishing RETAC to serve as a forum for discussion of issues relating to the transportation by rail of energy resources, including coal. Mr. Richards is CEO of Western Fuels Association, Inc. (WFA). WFA is a non-profit fuel supply cooperative formed in 1976 as the Nation's first fuel supply cooperative. It currently represents 21 consumer-owned utilities. WFA exists to assist its members in obtaining coal and coal transportation at reasonable delivered prices. WFA pursues those objectives by managing coal mines (through affiliated companies), managing a private rail car fleet, and purchasing coal, and coal transportation for some of its members.

I know Mr. Richards through Basin Electric's association with WFA as a member. Mr. Richards is well-qualified to serve as a RETAC member. He has a breadth and depth of knowledge on rail energy transportation matters, with over 20 years experience in rail transportation and fuel supply matters, including 3 years as CEO of WFA, approximately 18 years fuels experience with a large investor owned utility, and 10 years experience with a major coal supplier. He is intimately familiar with the important railroad economic, infrastructure, and service issues that will challenge RETAC. Mr. Richards would bring to RETAC a sharp perspective born of long and personal experience, toward helping the Board bring about effective railroad regulatory policies and oversight to ensure that rail energy customers have access to adequate and reliable transportation by rail. I believe that Mr. Richards would be effective in helping RETAC to carry out its mandate to provide independent and candid policy advice to the Board, while also helping to foster effective communication among suppliers, carriers, and users of energy resources.

I commend Mr. Richards to the Board's favorable consideration.

Respectfully yours,

  
Ronald R. Harper  
CEO & General Manager

me/ll

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