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Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

March 4, 2010

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Chairman Daniel R. Elliot III
Surface Transportation Board
395 E St., SW
Washington, DC 20423

No. AB-1043 (Sub-No. 1)

Dear Chairman Elliot:

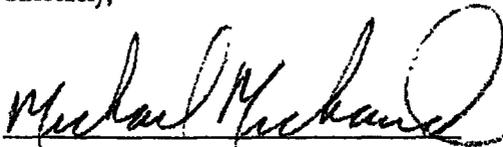
We are writing today to request a public hearing in the State of Maine on the "Application of the Montreal, Maine & Atlantic Railway, Ltd. for Authority to Discontinue Rail Service and Abandon Rail Lines." The abandonment, as proposed, will have an impact on numerous industries and communities throughout Penobscot and Aroostook Counties. It is imperative that the individuals that will be affected by the discontinuation of rail service have an opportunity to be heard by the Surface Transportation Board (STB).

According to the Maine Department of Transportation (DOT), the abandonment would adversely affect 22 active shippers, as well as other businesses, throughout a region that already faces significant impediments to economic development. As the Montreal, Maine & Atlantic moves forward with the abandonment process, it is essential that the STB take the time to fully consider the impact that the decision will have on established businesses and broader development efforts throughout northern Maine. A field hearing will guarantee that all stakeholders in Maine will have an opportunity to present the full effect of the abandonment to the STB.

On October 29, 2009, we had an opportunity to discuss the abandonment with representatives from the Federal Railroad Administration, Maine DOT and some of the businesses and organizations that rely on continued freight rail service in Maine's Second Congressional District. During the meeting, you assured everyone present that the abandonment process would be both open and accessible. Holding a hearing in the state is the most effective way to make certain that this occurs.

We appreciate your thoughtful consideration of this request and look forward to your response.

Sincerely,



Michael H. Michaud
Member of Congress



James L. Oberstar
Chairman, Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure