



SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BOARD

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MARTIN OBERMAN THANKS ANN BEGEMAN FOR HER SERVICE ON THE SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BOARD

I wish to thank and applaud Ann Begeman for her tireless leadership and dedication to the Surface Transportation Board as Chairman for the last four years. The STB and our regulatory system are substantially better off than when she started.

Among the complexities faced by the agency and the industry during Ann's tenure were service challenges and weather crises, demurrage issues, and the ongoing pandemic, all while most of the Class I railroads have undertaken major changes to their operating plans. Throughout all, Ann guided the agency's efforts to collect data and ensure frequent communication between railroads, shippers, all other stakeholders, and the Board, essential to the resolution of issues big and small. In particular, Ann led the Board through major initiatives to update the Board's policies and procedures in order to resolve significant issues which had arisen with demurrage.

Most importantly, Ann has championed our efforts to recognize and address the long-standing need for reform of the Board's rate review processes, forcefully initiating Board action to bring about real and productive change. Wisely, she created the Board's Rate Reform Task Force to identify potentially more affordable, accessible, and practical rate review mechanisms. Through Ann's leadership, we have already accomplished significant changes. I am confident that Ann's efforts will result in additional Board initiatives that will advance the interests of all stakeholders.

We also cannot overlook Ann's leadership through major administrative changes, including redesign of the agency's office space and, most recently, her successful management of the Board's transition to full-time virtual work as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. In addition, Ann not only presided over the addition of Patrick Fuchs and myself to the Board, but now has had the opportunity to preside over the recent addition of Robert Primus and Michelle Schultz, bringing the Board to its full complement of five members for the first time. Throughout, Ann has shown an endless dedication to this agency and its employees, and I know I speak for the entire STB community as we acknowledge and appreciate Ann for her past and continuing service.

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