



SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BOARD

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STATEMENT FROM STB CHAIRMAN MARTIN J. OBERMAN ON ONE-YEAR ANNIVERSARY OF EXECUTIVE ORDER ON COMPETITION

Surface Transportation Board Chairman Martin J. Oberman today commended the Biden Administration’s efforts to foster competition in U.S. businesses on the one-year anniversary of Executive Order 14036, “Promoting Competition in the American Economy.” The July 9, 2021, Executive Order established the White House Competition Council, designed to facilitate agency cooperation in promoting competition in U.S. industries. Chairman Oberman, who has actively participated in the Council’s activities, has prioritized enhancing competition in the nation’s rail industry where too many rail customers are captive to a single large railroad and for that reason often lack bargaining power to obtain better rail service and competitive pricing for their shipments. Oberman said that the Administration’s policy of emphasizing the need for more competition among U.S. businesses coincided with his own commitments to focus on improving rail competition and he welcomed the Administration’s underscoring the importance of improving competition as national policy.

Chairman Oberman also noted several of the agency’s own competition-related efforts and anticipated actions. These include a two-day hearing in March 2022 on reciprocal switching, which can give rail customers captive to a single carrier the opportunity to seek service from a competing carrier, and two proposed rulemakings to address rate reasonableness procedures, one involving a streamlined “final offer” procedure and the other involving an expedited voluntary binding arbitration procedure. The agency is also considering and carefully scrutinizing the proposed merger of two Class I railroads: the Canadian Pacific and Kansas City Southern systems. Chairman Oberman said he expects the agency to act expeditiously on all of these matters.

The Executive Order can be viewed on the White House website [here](#).

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