



# SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BOARD

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## **STB GATHERS MORE THAN 100 IDEAS FROM LEGAL PRACTITIONERS TO STREAMLINE BOARD PROCESSES**

Surface Transportation Board Chairman Patrick Fuchs announced today that recent listening sessions led by Vice Chairman Michelle Schultz with legal practitioners have generated valuable feedback, and Vice Chairman Schultz has provided five initial recommendations for streamlining Board processes and procedures.

As previously announced, Vice Chairman Schultz initiated these informal sessions as part of Chairman Fuchs' broader initiative to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of the STB. Over the course of several days of listening sessions, Vice Chairman Schultz met with dozens of attorneys who regularly practice before the agency, gathering more than 100 ideas for process improvements.

Following a thorough review of the suggested ideas, Vice Chairman Schultz has provided her recommendations to Chairman Fuchs, including five potential initial action items that the Board should consider. The action items are focused on the areas of: (1) ex parte communications and the use of staff liaisons; (2) delegations of authority; (3) discovery; (4) technical conferences; and (5) replies to replies.

"The level of participation went far beyond what I had hoped for," said Vice Chairman Schultz. "I found the conversations to be incredibly helpful, offering insight that could only be provided by those who are regularly engaged with the Board's procedures, practices, and regulations. The practitioners put forth many thoughtful ideas for our consideration which I think will help further Chairman Fuchs' goal of increasing the Board's efficiency. I am grateful for the opportunity to assist the Chairman and to work with my colleagues as we continue to streamline our procedures to ensure timely and effective adjudications."

"The agency's talented community of practitioners has answered the call, and I am grateful to Vice Chairman Schultz for her swift, diligent review and strong process improvement recommendations," said Chairman Fuchs. "I intend for the Board to consider the recommendations expeditiously and take appropriate action to advance our mission."

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