

May 23, 2017

The President
The White House
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear President Trump:

The Rail Customer Coalition (RCC) strongly encourages you to nominate Senate Commerce Committee Chairman Thune's senior professional staff member Patrick Fuchs to the Surface Transportation Board (STB).

The RCC is a large collection of trade associations representing a broad cross section of manufacturing, agricultural, and energy industries with more than 7.6 million employees throughout the United States and generating \$4.8 trillion in economic output. Members of the coalition represent the largest users of freight rail, and depend on the railroads to deliver reliable and affordable service in order to remain competitive in a global market.

Our members support Mr. Fuchs' nomination because he is the most qualified person under consideration for the STB and a terrific candidate for carrying out your mission to remove regulatory barriers and promote growth here in the U.S. His deep understanding of the transportation issues facing both the railroads and their customers would be a tremendous asset for the STB.

Fuchs was the lead author of the STB Reauthorization Act of 2015, the first legislation in over 20 years to provide congressional direction to the STB. He has proven to be thoughtful and objective when it comes to addressing transportation issues and he has acted with the utmost integrity throughout his career – qualities that are vital for serving on the Board.

Furthermore, the RCC recommends that Acting Chairman Ann Begeman be made the permanent chair for the STB. She is universally regarded as being a trustworthy and dynamic member of the STB. Her long experience in both Senate transportation staff roles, as well as the Republican board member at STB, make her ideal for the role of chairman.

Finally, it is imperative both for railroads and for their customers to have confidence that the STB is a fair and unbiased arbiter of disputes, which is why the RCC strongly discourages naming rail industry veterans to the Board, especially as Chair.

STB policies have a direct impact on investment decisions in the United States, as affordable and reliable rail transportation is a prerequisite for many businesses. In order to fully realize the benefits of a manufacturing renaissance, the STB must be comprised of members who will make decisions that are based on current economic realities and founded on free market

principles. Board members must be committed to moving the STB forward instead of preserving the status quo.

To be successful, the STB must eliminate outdated rules and overly bureaucratic procedures that shield the rail industry from competition and impede growth in the U.S. Many shippers—from factories to farms—are captive to a single railroad, and the STB has been ineffective in addressing widespread complaints about unreasonable rates and poor service. In addition, the STB's current members, Republican and Democrat alike, have acknowledged in recent written opinions that the Board's rate review process is not functioning properly.

We welcome further discussion with you on these issues, and look forward to working with you to finding the best solutions for improving the efficiency of our freight rail network, attracting increased investments in the U.S. and growing our economy.

Sincerely,

Agriculture & Commodities Transportation Coalition
Agricultural Retailers Association
Alliance for Rail Competition
American Chemistry Council
American Farm Bureau Federation
American Forest & Paper Association
American Fuel & Petrochemical Manufacturers
American Malting Barley Association, Inc.
The Chlorine Institute
The Fertilizer Institute
Glass Packaging Institute
Growth Energy
Institute of Scrap Recycling Industries, Inc.
Louisiana Chemical Association
Louisiana Chemical Industry Alliance
National Association of Chemical Distributors
National Farmers Union
National Industrial Transportation League
Plastic Pipe and Fittings Association
Private Railcar Food and Beverage Association
Resilient Floor Covering Institute
Steel Manufacturers Association
The Sulphur Institute
The Vinyl Institute