



April 9, 2018

The Honorable John Thune  
Chairman  
Committee on Commerce, Science,  
and Transportation  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Bill Nelson  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Commerce, Science,  
and Transportation  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

**RE: Confirmation of Surface Transportation Board Nominations**

Dear Chairman Thune and Ranking Member Nelson:

The Rail Customer Coalition (RCC) strongly supports President Trump's nominations of Patrick Fuchs and Michelle Schultz to serve as members of the Surface Transportation Board (STB), as well as the selection of Ann Begeman to serve as STB Chairman. We urge the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation to confirm the nominees as quickly as possible.

The RCC is comprised of more than 70 leading associations representing American manufacturing, agriculture and energy industries and some of the nation's largest freight rail customers. Together we provide more than seven million direct jobs, support millions more throughout the United States and generate trillions of dollars in economic output each year. Our members depend on the railroads to deliver reliable and affordable service in order to remain competitive in a global market.

As the increasing number of reports of service failures and skyrocketing costs demonstrate, rail customers need a fully staffed STB committed to enacting reforms that will increase access to competitive service, streamline overly-bureaucratic procedures and improve the overall effectiveness of the Board.

Competition is the foundation of the free enterprise system and helps American producers grow their businesses, generate new investments and create jobs. However, many freight rail customers have no effective competition for transportation service. The STB should, first and foremost, promote greater competition in the rail sector wherever possible, and fulfill its essential oversight role where no effective competition exists.

The confirmation of Mr. Fuchs and Ms. Shultz and the designation of Ms. Begeman as the Chairman will allow the Board to continue implementing the *STB Reauthorization Act of 2015* and to advance efforts to modernize the Agency.

We also call on President Trump and the Senate to resolve the other current and pending vacancies on the Board. Specifically, the RCC urges the naming of an additional nominee to fill the third open seat and strongly supports the re-nomination of Deb Miller to serve a second term on the Board. During her tenure, Ms. Miller has taken a very thoughtful and fair approach to issues brought before the Board and has proven to be a dedicated public servant.

The RCC looks forward to working with the Committee during the conformation process for these nominees, and to advancing rail policies that support growth across the entire U.S. economy.

Sincerely,

Agricultural Retailers Association

Alliance for Rail Competition

Alliance of Automobile Manufacturers

American Chemistry Council

American Farm Bureau Federation

American Forest and Paper Association

American Fuel and Petrochemical Manufacturers

American Malting Barley Association

Association of Global Automakers

Corn Refiners Association

Glass Packaging Institute

Global Automakers

Independent Lubricant Manufacturers Association

Industrial Materials Association - North America

Institute of Scrap Recycling Industries

International Warehouse Logistics Association

National Association of Chemical Distributors

National Industrial Sand Association

National Industrial Transportation League

National Mining Association

Plastic Pipe and Fittings Association

Plastics Industry Association

Private Railcar Food and Beverage Association

Resilient Floor Covering Institute

Steel Manufacturers Association

The Chlorine Institute

The Fertilizer Institute

The Sulphur Institute

Vinyl Institute