



HOUSE OF DELEGATES WEST VIRGINIA LEGISLATURE

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Committees:
Judiciary
Political Subdivisions
Veterans' Affairs and
Homeland Security

February 13, 2016

Chairman Daniel R. Elliott, III
Surface Transportation Board
395 E Street, S.W.
Washington, DC 20423-000

Chairman Elliott and Members of the Board,

On behalf of the more than fifteen industries and 2,000 individuals employed in the manufacturing sector in the Northern Panhandle of West Virginia, I am writing to voice my concerns of the potential acquisition of Norfolk Southern Railway (NS) by Canadian Pacific Railway (CP).

The Northern Panhandle, and more specifically my District of Brooke and Ohio Counties, has been serviced by NS for decades. The economic benefits which NS has created, and continues to create, are significant, and for that reason I wanted to bring this matter to your attention. Just as my State's Congressional Delegation has previously stated, I too have significant concerns that CP's unsolicited proposal to acquire NS, if allowed to proceed, would have a negative impact on West Virginia's manufacturers, our ability to fully participate in interstate commerce, and to the State's transportation infrastructure.

Spanning over 25 miles of track, and including three rail yards and two ports, Norfolk Southern's network is critically important to our region's economy. In the Northern Panhandle alone, NS has contributed to the positive economic conditions which have led to private and public investments approaching \$200 million in our two counties; a reduction in our unemployment rate of almost 5%; and the preservation and creation of almost 2,000 jobs.

Furthermore, NS has worked with my District's Economic Development Agency, the Business Development Corporation of the Northern Panhandle (BDC) to foster economic development through site identification and development, marketing efforts, and project management when prospective businesses visit the area. Currently, the BDC is in the process of working with NS to add service which would create opportunities for approximately \$2 billion of private investment in Brooke and Hancock counties alone.

Given these factors, I echo the sentiments of my State's Congressional Delegation by saying that I have significant reservations regarding Canadian Pacific's potential acquisition of Norfolk Southern. Please know that we all consider this matter to be of the utmost importance to the industries of the Northern Panhandle. It is my hope that you, along with the Members of your Board, follow this situation closely to ensure that nothing is done that will hurt the economic prospects of a region which has only recently begun to rebound from the devastating losses of its steel industry.

Thank you for taking the time to hear my concerns, and if you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact me at 304-670-6605 or at ryan.weld@wvhouse.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R. W. Weld', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Ryan W. Weld
West Virginia House of Delegates

CC: U.S. Senator Joe Manchin
U.S. Senator Shelley Moore Capito
U.S. Congressman McKinley
Starvaggi Industries, Inc.
Weirton Ice & Coal Supply Company
Sal Chemical Company
Center Point Terminal