



Office of the Chairman

Surface Transportation Board
Washington, D.C. 20423-0001

From: Charles D. Nottingham
Chairman

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The STB has hired Christensen Associates to conduct an independent study of competition in the U.S. freight railroad industry. By “independent,” I mean just that; the Board is not directing the activities of Christensen Associates. For the next few months, Christensen will be engaged in extensive outreach to all stakeholders – railroads, shippers, labor unions, and government agencies. Armed with the results of this qualitative research, Christensen will then conduct a rigorous empirical study aimed at assessing the current state of competition in the industry.

As I travel about the country, I hear many concerns about the state of competition in the railroad industry and about the need for increased capacity. On one hand, railroad rates are rising – sharply in some cases. On the other hand, railroads will need to invest tens of billions of dollars in their infrastructure to meet the demands of a growing economy over the next decade. I am hopeful that this study will provide both a useful assessment of the state of competition in the railroad industry, as well as suggestions for addressing these critical issues.

To ensure that everyone who is interested in the railroad industry can voice their opinion, Christensen Associates is opening this web-based forum that will permit you to offer your views on the state of competition in the industry. I would encourage you to participate in this discussion. The more voices we hear from, the more confidence we can all have in the conclusions that Christensen Associates, Inc. will reach.

Thank you for your interest in this very important issue.