



MONTANA PETROLEUM ASSOCIATION, INC.

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Sonny Capece
Executive Director

October 9, 2025

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Duncan Crosbie, Vice President,
Downstream, Phillips 66

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The Honorable Patrick Fuchs
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Surface Transportation Board
395 E Street, NW
Washington, DC 20423

The Honorable Michelle Schultz
Vice Chairman
Surface Transportation Board
395 E Street, NW
Washington, DC 20423

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The Honorable Karen Hedlund
Member
Surface Transportation Board
395 E Street, NW
Washington, DC 20423

Dear Chairman Fuchs, Vice Chairman Schultz, and Member Hedlund,

On behalf of the Montana Petroleum Association (MPA) and the energy producers, refiners, and service companies that power Montana's economy, we respectfully submit our concerns regarding the proposed merger between Union Pacific and Norfolk Southern.

Montana's oil and gas industry depends heavily on a reliable, competitive freight rail network to move energy products safely and efficiently to markets across the country. Rail access is not a luxury in our region it is an economic lifeline that connects resource-producing communities to refineries, consumers, and export opportunities. When competition in the rail sector diminishes, the effects are felt immediately in higher costs, reduced service quality, and greater supply chain risk for Montana producers and the communities they support.

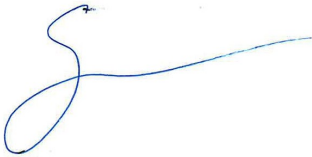
Past rail mergers have demonstrated the dangers of unchecked consolidation: limited routing options, service disruptions, and higher transportation costs for captive shippers. With just four Class I railroads now controlling more than 90 percent of the nation's freight traffic, a merger of this scale could further erode competitive access particularly in rural and energy-producing states like Montana, where alternatives are already limited.

Such a merger runs counter to national goals of strengthening domestic energy production, rebuilding supply chains, and promoting fair competition across industries. Rather than fostering growth, additional consolidation would deepen the challenges faced by industries that form the backbone of America's energy and manufacturing economy.

The Surface Transportation Board's review of this proposal offers a critical opportunity to protect competition and ensure the long-term stability of the freight rail system. We urge the Board to closely scrutinize the impacts this merger would have on captive shippers, service reliability, and economic competitiveness. Any transaction that extends the market power of a single carrier must be required to demonstrate measurable, system-wide benefits to competition not simply operational efficiencies or single-line service advantages.

The Montana Petroleum Association stands with partners across the energy and manufacturing sectors in calling for strong, transparent regulatory oversight that safeguards fair access to rail transportation. A healthy, competitive rail network is essential to keeping Montana's energy industry and the nation's economy moving forward.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of a large, stylized 'S' followed by a horizontal line extending to the right.

Sonny Capece, Executive Director
Montana Petroleum Association