



RAIL REPORT

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Legislative Update

New Co-sponsors

H.R. 2125: (total now 54) Rep. Ellison, Keith M. [D, MN-05]

H.R. 1650 (total now 22): Rep. Ellison, Keith M. [D, MN-05]

S. 772: (total now 12): Sen. Klobuchar, Amy (D-MN), and Sen. Lincoln, Blanche L. (D-AR)

Graphic Tool Section

Below you will find a link to a PowerPoint presentation on CURE issues. Please feel free to use these materials in your efforts.

[Download PowerPoint Slides](#)

CURE NEWSLETTER: APRIL 2008

Rail Customers Promote Rail Reform Legislation on Capitol Hill



They came from as far away as the states of North Dakota and Washington. They represented electric utilities, homeowners, farmers, chemical companies, businesspeople and Americans from all walks of life. There were more than 150 of them, all with diverse backgrounds and interests. And, they came to

Capitol Hill on March 12 for one reason: the fourth annual Rail Customer Day.

They came to let elected officials in Washington hear loud and clear - from the people being directly affected - that it is time to finally bring relief to the millions of Americans being overcharged for everything from the electricity they need to keep their lights on to the food they put on their family's table. Their message was loud and clear: It is time for Congress to pass the **Railroad Antitrust Enforcement Act of 2007** (H.R. 1650 and S. 772) and the **Railroad Competition and Service Improvement Act of 2007** (H.R. 2125 and S. 953).



They came with stories - stories that are depressingly familiar to captive rail customers but still have the power to shock the sensibilities of Members of Congress who have been lobbied by the rail monopoly. At a breakfast rally that morning, Congressman Zack Space (D-OH) talks about constituents who have to choose every month between paying their utility bills and buying food for their families.

They came, and they succeeded. Nearly 150 meetings with Representatives and Senators were held throughout the day. Senator Blanche Lincoln (D-AR) was among those who became convinced that the time for reform is now. She is the newest cosponsor of the Railroad Antitrust Enforcement Act of 2007, joining Senator Amy Klobuchar (D-MN) and Congressman Keith M. Ellison (D-MN), who also signed onto the bill in March.

For the first time in many years, momentum is on the side of consumers. But we have a VERY NARROW WINDOW in which to act. Congress is back from the Easter recess, but will soon become fully consumed with election-year politics, regulatory reform for the financial sector and mortgage crisis relief. Please contact, your Representative(s) and Senator(s) TODAY, and ask that they pass the **Railroad Antitrust Enforcement Act and the Railroad Competition and Service Improvement Act during this session.**

To get the e-mail address of your Representative and Senators, visit www.congress.org.

For materials to use in your community and a draft letter to Congress, visit www.railcure.org

Rail World vs. Real World

Member Spotlight: Carmie Henry, Vice President, Arkansas Electric Cooperative Corporation

How long have you been working on this issue?

Our group of cooperatives has been working with Senator Blanche Lincoln (D-AR) since 2005 on the rail legislation.

How did you become involved?

2005 was the year that our industry was so hard-hit by limited coal deliveries. We had to go into restricted burns in the middle of the winter because supplies were so short. The railroads never made up for lost deliveries, which ultimately cost us - and our customers - at least a hundred million dollars.

What have some of your lobbying tactics been?

There's just no substitute for face-to-face meetings and follow-up. Ultimately, this issue is about people and the ill effects they're suffering. So we have had private meetings with Senator Lincoln in Washington, brought her to our statewide headquarters for meetings with small groups of board members, and each year during our industry legislative conference we have had about 90 of our directors in 30-minute meetings with every member of our Arkansas delegation. We also formed Arkansas CURE and have gathered under that banner a wide range of Arkansas economic interests that are experiencing rail problems; Arkansas CURE as a group has met with the Members of our delegation both in Arkansas and in Washington. We've asked pointed questions, provided the facts, and backed up our messages through our statewide magazine and urged our members to write to their elected officials.

What advice do you have for others?

Once you've covered all the basics - face-to-face meetings and lots of follow-up - I believe the most important thing right now is to expand the coalition. In our state, recently getting Tyson Foods to sign on to our effort was really critical, and we still hope to expand further. We're at a real tipping point and I think it's vital that Congress hears from the source that in one way or another this issue affects literally every business - and every American - out there.

Wild Card: Noted & Quoted

"You don't really have a competitive environment anymore. ...The burden of contesting it lies with the customer."

Terry Huval
Director, Lafayette Utilities System
The (Baton Rouge, La.) Advocate. March 17, 2008

Consumers United for Rail Equity (CURE) represents a wide variety of rail customers including public utilities, rural electric coops, agriculture; chemical, ethanol, cement and other manufacturers, forest and paper companies, and their customers.

For more information about CURE visit: www.railcure.org.