



Rail Customer News & Information From CURE



RAIL REPORT

May 2010

In This Issue

[Rockefeller Committed to Passing STB Reform](#)

[Rail Customer Day a Success](#)

[New Obama Administration Study Shows America's Farmers and Rural Businesses, Consumers and Communities are Hurt by Big Railroads](#)

[Congressman Walz Pushes for STB Reform in Op-Ed](#)

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Rockefeller Committed to Passing STB Reform This Year

In a statement released prior to CURE's Rail Customer Day on Capitol Hill and again at the Rail Customer Day breakfast rally on May 5, Senate Commerce Committee Chairman John D. Rockefeller, IV (D-WV) reiterated his strong commitment to passing the Surface Transportation Board Reauthorization Act of 2009, bipartisan compromise legislation that was reported unanimously by the Commerce Committee on December 17, 2009, through Congress this year.

"It is critically important that we have a competitive, efficient, and balanced transportation network to ensure the success of our economy and rural communities. The effects of deregulation and recent rate hikes again emphasize the need to fix the current rail oversight structure to support more competition and fairness for captive rail shippers," [said Chairman Rockefeller in a released statement](#).

Noted and Quoted

"I am committed to passing my Surface Transportation Board Reauthorization Act of 2009 this year."

- Senate Commerce Committee Chairman John D. Rockefeller, IV (D-WV), Press Release, 5/4/10

Rail Customer Day a Success

Freight rail customers from around the United States gathered on Capitol Hill on May 5 to show wide support for rail reform legislation. The attendees held a morning rally where they heard strongly supportive remarks from Chairman Rockefeller and key Senators Herb Kohl (D-WI), Byron Dorgan (D-ND) and Amy Klobuchar (D-MN). That evening, CURE held a reception with Chairmen James Oberstar (D-MN) and John Conyers (D-MI), and Congresswoman Tammy Baldwin (D-WI) and Congressman Tim Walz (D-MN). Between the rally and reception, freight rail customers took to the halls of Congress meeting with legislators

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and their staff about the need for rail reform.

Rail Customer Day received press coverage in several notable publications, including The White House Bulletin, The Journal of Commerce, Platts, Progressive Railroading and Energy Washington.

New Obama Administration Study Shows America's Farmers and Rural Businesses, Consumers and Communities are Hurt by Big Railroads

A new U.S. Department of Agriculture and Department of Transportation report on rural transportation issues found that many farmers, rural businesses, rural consumers and rural communities are hurt by their status as captive shippers, and that freight rail companies imposed excessive fuel surcharges to boost profits artificially.

Among the study's findings is that nearly 75 percent of agricultural areas lost rail competition between 1992 and 2007. The rapid consolidation of the rail industry has made it more difficult for many farmers to get their products shipped, and leaves many with no alternative but to pay excessive rates charged by the railroads.

[The study can be found here.](#)

Congressman Walz Pushes for STB Reform in Op-Ed

Congressman Tim Walz (D-MN) urged Congress to take action on Surface Transportation Board Reform legislation in a recent op-ed that was published in The Hill newspaper. Walz wrote of the problems that face captive shippers and how excessive rail rates ultimately hurt consumers. STB reform would "restore competition and fairness to a broken system that is badly in need of repair," wrote Walz. [The full op-ed can be viewed here.](#)

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