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February 10, 2022

Ms. Cynthia T. Brown
Chief, Section of Administration
Surface Transportation Board
Office of Proceedings
395 E Street SW, Room 1034
Washington, DC 20025

ENTERED
Office of Proceedings
February 11, 2022
Part of
Public Record

RE: *Reciprocal Switching*, Docket No. EP 711 (Sub-No. 1) –

Dear Ms. Brown:

Regarding the Surface Transportation Board’s 2016 Notice of Proposed Rulemaking on Reciprocal Switching: As the board considers a ruling on this matter, Metra asks that the board carefully consider the potential impacts – both immediate and over the long term -- that their ruling may have on passenger rail operations in the Chicago area.

Chicago is the nation’s largest rail gateway, hosting more than 500 freight and 800 passenger trains every day. Metra operates throughout Chicagoland and beyond, serving Cook, DuPage, Will, Lake, Kane, and McHenry counties in northeastern Illinois, and is one of the largest, most complex commuter rail systems in North America. Metra provides service to and from downtown Chicago, with 242 stations over 11 routes totaling nearly 500 route miles and approximately 1,200 miles of track. As part of these operations, Metra works closely with its freight railroad partners to ensure network fluidity, while striving to keep all trains – freight and passenger alike – on schedule, and at the same time, enhancing our operating environment to the benefit of all parties.

Metra supports maintaining fluidity and minimizing congestion on the rails within the Chicagoland region. On-time performance in the commuter rail space is measured in minutes, and delays due to freight train interference, especially during peak service periods, can have a cascading effect on commuter operations, and a devastating effect on the daily lives of our customers.

Your consideration of Commuter and Intercity Rail Passenger service when ruling on this issue will help ensure smooth and reliable transportation for Chicagoland rail passengers for many years to come.

Kind regards,

Jim Derwinski
CEO/Executive Director

cc: Kevin McCann, Chief Operating Officer
John Milano, Deputy Executive Director – Administration
David Martinez – Director, PTC Deployment & Regulatory Compliance