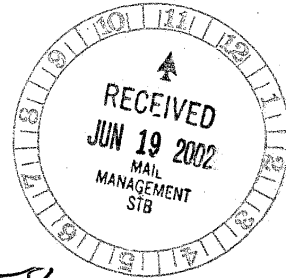


SOUTH DAKOTA FARM BUREAU



June 18, 2002



205 658

Surface Transportation Board
1925 K Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20423-0001

Reference: STB Finance Docket No. 34177

The South Dakota Farm Bureau Federation (SDFB) represents a membership of 10,900 farmers, ranchers and rural families.

SDFB strongly urges the Surface Transportation Board to approve the I & M Rail Link by the Dakota, Minnesota & Eastern Railroad (DM&E). This acquisition would benefit agriculture in our state by increasing competitive opportunities for the states ag producers.

Ag producers in our state will be allowed market access that is not possible today. Increasing market opportunities will result in increased net farm income. This acquisition represents a true recommitment to improved and increased rail opportunities.

SDFB also urges you to resist any stay petitions that may be filed in this matter. A timely approval is important to S.D. agriculture, all South Dakota rail users, our rural communities along the line and the state as a whole.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Richard Kjerstad
President
South Dakota Farm Bureau

cc: William C. Sippel, Fletcher & Sippel LLC

ENTERED
Office of the Secretary

JUN 19 2002

Part of
Public Record