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The Honorable Martin J. Oberman
Chairman
Surface Transportation Board
395 E Street SW
Washington, DC 20423

Attn: Docket No. EP 526 (Sub-No. 14)

Re: Notice of Railroad-Shipper Transportation Advisory Council Vacancies

Dear Chairman Oberman,

I write to express my sincere interest in the available appointment as a small railroad representative to the Railroad-Shipper Transportation Advisory Council (RSTAC). Currently, I serve as President and CEO of Iowa Interstate Railroad (IAIS), a Class II regional railroad operating over 570 miles of trackage between Chicago and Omaha and employing 230 people. Both my industry experience and relationships with a diverse variety of shippers should provide value to this council and, ultimately, to the Surface Transportation Board.

Over my eighteen-year career spanning Class I, II, and III railroads, I have learned the importance of providing consistent and reliable service to shippers, no matter their size. Upon graduating from West Virginia Wesleyan College, I commenced my railroad career at Norfolk Southern, first as a Management Trainee on the Piedmont Division, then as a Trainmaster in Columbia, South Carolina, later moving to Dayton, Ohio, and serving as District Trainmaster, and, culminating in Cincinnati, Ohio, as Assistant Superintendent and Terminal Superintendent. After nine years working in the Class I environment focusing only on operations, I pursued an opportunity to work in the short line industry. That decision proved to be pivotal in developing the skills necessary to successfully build the team that manages the safe and efficient railroad IAIS is today.

During my tenure at IAIS, first as Chief Operating Officer and now as President/CEO, our business has continued to grow because of our focus on working with diverse shippers, ranging from a new ethanol production facility in Atlantic, Iowa, moving thousands of carloads per year to small aggregate transloads serving local construction markets all across Iowa and handling just a few dozen carloads per year. We have also participated in public private partnerships to develop new opportunities in places like Des Moines, Iowa, for transloading, and Booneville, Iowa, where we partnered with the Federal Railroad Administration to construct a new bridge to ensure a resilient, reliable freight network for shippers across the Midwest for decades to come. Every customer and new opportunity is important to IAIS, regardless of its size.

Although IAIS' customers include steel, aggregates, and chemical customers, our largest customers produce and ship grains, ethanol, and various agricultural products. In addition, IAIS owns the largest intermodal ramp facility in Iowa and it is uniquely positioned in that it connects, and therefore must maintain relationships, with all seven Class I railroads. Iowa Interstate Railroad's intrinsic qualities demonstrate a breadth of experience that should permit me to effectively represent the perspective of a Class II regional railroad on RSTAC.



Regarding industry groups, I have served seven years on the Safety and Operations Management Committee (SOMC) at the American Association of Railroads (AAR), and currently represent IAIS at the AAR Board. I am active in the American Short Line and Regional Railroad Association, holding a seat on its Legislative Policy Committee and advocate for the rail industry at the local and national level. Additionally, I am a member of the BNSF Railway Shortline Caucus and the Iowa Department of Transportation Freight Advisory Council.

I am willing to serve as an RSTAC member effective immediately upon appointment and I am available to travel as necessary to fulfill all member obligations. Should I be appointed I will also bring the full support of my Board as needed and appropriate. I would be honored to be appointed to RSTAC and will appreciate your consideration of my sincere interest in this service.

Respectfully submitted,

IOWA INTERSTATE RAILROAD, LLC

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Joe B. Parsons", is written over the printed name.

Joe B. Parsons
President and Chief Executive Officer

cc: Henry Posner III, Chairman