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Office of the Secretary
Case Control Unit
STB Finance Docket 34075
Surface Transportation Board
1925 K Street, NW
Washington D.C 20423-0001

NOV 12 2003

STB Finance Docket No. 34075 – Environmental Comments

*Six County Association of Governments - Construction and Operation Exemption - Rail
Line between Levan and Salina, Utah*

Dear Mr. Secretary:

We are writing in support of the current environmental process being conducted by the Surface Transportation Board in behalf of the Central Utah Rail Project. We are aware of this project and the benefits to the economic competitiveness in Utah's mining industry, by reducing transportation costs associated with trucking a bulk commodity. This project would reduce the longest truck haul of coal in the United States.

We are encouraged by the efforts of the Six County Association of Government in looking at the economic viability of the local coal industry, and the transportation and safety needs of the Juab, Sanpete, and Sevier Counties. We also recognize the heavy burden on the state of Utah for road maintenance and construction as the Utah Department of Transportation is responsible for repairs created by heavy trucks on its two-lane highways. Completion of the Central Utah Rail Project will keep the remaining truck haul on interstate highways designed to accommodate heavier payloads.

The economic vitality of rural Utah is important and we believe this project will protect existing jobs and encourage new industrial development for an economically depressed region.

Sincerely,



Robert F. Bennett
United States Senator



Chris Cannon
Member of Congress

RFB:CC:dms