

GORDON H SMITH  
OREGON

**United States Senate**  
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-3704

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September 11, 2008

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The Honorable Charles D Nottingham  
Chairman  
Surface Transportation Board  
Washington, DC 20423

Re Finance Docket No 35175, *Roseburg Forest Products Co , Timber Products Company, LP, Suburban Propane, LP, Cowley D&L, Inc, Sousa Ag Service and Yreka Western Railroad Company – Alternative Rail Service – Central Oregon & Pacific Railroad, Inc.*

Dear Chairman Nottingham:

I am writing to express my support for the petition filed by Roseburg Forest Products Company and others for an alternative rail service order over the rail line operated by Central Oregon & Pacific Railroad, Inc. (CORP) between Black Butte, California and Dillard, Oregon.

Over the last year, CORP has drastically reduced service and increased rates on the line. The combination of service reductions with exorbitant rate increases has made freight transportation by rail neither practical nor affordable for shippers in southern Oregon and northern California. As a result, a number of major shippers have been forced to shift their products to truck transportation, which has only added to congestion on our highways.

In order to restore efficient rail service and avoid continued economic loss to the region, the Coos-Siskiyou Shippers Coalition has submitted a proposal to allow the West Texas & Lubbock Railroad, in partnership with the Yreka Western Railroad, to provide alternative rail service over the existing track.

Rail service is integral to the local economy and a solution to the current situation is urgently needed. An alternative service order will provide real relief for shippers who have had to scramble to come up with costly and less efficient transportation options to move their products.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter. I look forward to your decision in the coming weeks.

Sincerely,



Gordon H. Smith  
United States Senate