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## Increasing Railway Efficiency, Reducing Poor Service

The nationwide shortage of transportation capacity affects the forest products industry. In addition to the difficulty of moving raw materials to mills, moving products to customers is increasingly difficult and costly.

Rail customers are not receiving reliable rail service at reasonable rates. Nearly one-third of forest products facilities have access to only one rail carrier. The railroad industry has an obligation to serve its customers and the nation's freight rail needs, but many see their monopoly status as an opportunity to charge excessive rates while providing poor service.

AF&PA supports legislation to reform the Surface Transportation Board (STB), which regulates the nation's railroads, but which is ineffective in addressing rail service problems. AF&PA supports reforming the STB, which is failing in its mission to ensure competition and protect rail customers from railroad monopoly power. Impediments to competition adversely affecting rail customers need to be removed.

- Specifically, AF&PA supports S. 808, the Surface Transportation Reauthorization Act introduced by Senators John Thune (R-SD) and Bill Nelson (D-FL)
- The legislation would streamline rate case procedures, create a meaningful alternative dispute resolution process, and require an analysis of the rules under which the Board operates. Other common-sense improvements include allowing the Board members to discuss agency matters with each other, permitting the Board to launch its own investigations, and creating much needed timelines for completing cases.

## The Time for Change Is Now

AF&PA requests support for rail competition and service improvement legislation. Shippers who rely on railroads need relief from decreasing quality of service, increasing costs and an ineffective railroad regulatory body.