



The Wisconsin State Legislature

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**State Reps ask Feds to Delay WI Southern Railroad Sale 60 Days–**

*To give time to explore whether this sale will create or cost jobs, improve service, is a political kickback for illegal campaign contributions*

Madison, WI— Five State Representatives today called on the federal Surface Transportation Board to delay the sale of the Wisconsin and Southern Railroad for 60 days to address questions.

“Wisconsin has lost almost 35,000 jobs since Governor Walker's state budget was passed in July. In Sauk County alone rail-dependent businesses *employ over 1500 workers* and they depend on reliable freight rail service to keep shipping costs low and remain profitable. We need to make sure this sale of Wisconsin and Southern assets won't cost our community more jobs or hurt our farmers and manufacturers,” said Rep. Fred Clark of Baraboo.

This 60 day delay would give legislators and the public time to explore these questions:

1. Would Wisconsin farmers, manufacturers, and rail shippers be hurt by a change in a rail carrier as they were with [the sale of the Wisconsin Central line?](#)
2. Is the buyer willing and able to work with state and local officials to improve freight and restore passenger train service to many parts of Wisconsin?
3. Could the State of Wisconsin get a better deal on the more than \$60 million taxpayers have invested in train tracks with a more open bidding process like an RFI for sale?
4. Is this sale a political payback for [illegal campaign contributions made to the Governor by WSOR officials?](#)

“We are asking for 60 days to make sure our taxpayers' investment of more than \$60 million in track upgrades will be well protected by the new owners,” said Rep. Brett Hulsey of Madison, a longtime supporter of train improvements.

MORE

## **Letter on WSOR Train Sale, Page Two**

“This sale should be further reviewed to allow the public more time to understand how businesses that use this railroad will be affected by its sale, especially since the public has invested so many tax dollars by upgrading the Wisconsin & Southern Railroad infrastructure,” said Rep. Louis Molepske of Stevens Point, ranking member of the Assembly Jobs Committee. “Given the history of what has occurred since the Central Wisconsin Railroad was acquired by Canadian National, a foreign corporation, the public must fully understand how business practices and reliable access will change to these rail corridors. Central Wisconsin paper mills and northern Wisconsin forest product companies found less access to rail service when Canadian National purchased Central Wisconsin Railroad and other affiliated rail corridors.”

"Wisconsin citizens deserve maximum transparency to ensure that taxpayers are getting a fair deal and to eliminate any appearance of special favors," said Rep. Kelda Helen Roys of Madison.

“We need more freight train capacity to get products to market and get trucks off the road and I want to make sure this sale will do that,” said Rep. Terese Berceau of Madison.

The STB is an economic regulatory agency charged with resolving freight railroad rate and service disputes, reviewing proposed rail mergers, rail line purchases, constructions and abandonments. The Board also oversees Amtrak’s on-time performance and has jurisdiction over other matters. For more information click [here](#).

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