

SENATE COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION

Full Committee
Nomination Hearing
Thursday, November 6, 2025, at 10:00 A.M.

REPUBLICAN QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD

Mr. Richard Kloster

COVER PAGE

CHAIRMAN TED CRUZ (R-TX)

1. The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) is the federal agency responsible, in part, for budget and personnel decisions across the executive branch. Recently, OMB sent a message to federal employees, including members of the Surface Transportation Board (STB), providing funding and personnel guidance in the wake of the government shutdown. STB leadership forwarded the contents of this message to STB employees. Do you agree that merely forwarding a message from OMB about the government shutdown does not weaken STB's impartiality and ability decide matters before it in compliance with relevant laws?

Answer : **Yes, I agree that this does not affect the STB's impartiality and ability to decide matters before it in compliance with relevant laws.**

2. Former STB Democrat Chairman Martin Oberman served on President Biden's "White House Competition Council" during his tenure as STB chairman and attended many meetings at the White House. STB members, and other members of independent executive agencies, interact with the President and other parts of the executive branch in the ordinary course of their work. Do you agree that an STB member, like Mr. Oberman in the Biden administration, can talk with the President or other members of the administration without affecting his or her impartiality in deciding matters before the STB?

Answer: **Yes, I agree an STB member can talk with the President or other members of the Administration without affecting his or her impartiality in deciding matters before the STB. I believe it is not improper or inappropriate for agency heads, including STB members, to communicate with the President or other parts of the Executive Branch, consistent with applicable law. If confirmed, I commit to giving full and fair consideration to all comments filed in the docket.**

SENATOR ERIC SCHMITT (R-MO)

1. St. Louis is one of only a few cities in the US with major facilities for both Union Pacific and Norfolk Southern. Any merger among these carriers could significantly affect the region.
 - When reviewing a merger of this scale, how do you intend to evaluate local economic impacts in cities like St. Louis—specifically in terms of employment, service reliability, and freight movement?

What safeguards will you commit to implementing to ensure that communities like St. Louis don't lose rail capacity or face service degradation as a result of network realignment?

Answer: **Because the UP-NS merger is currently pending before the STB, I cannot comment further. If confirmed, I commit to carefully reviewing all comments of stakeholders, filed in the docket and to apply the relevant law.**