

State of Misconsin 2005 - 2006 LEGISLATURE

2005 SENATE RESOLUTION 13

February 14, 2006 – Introduced by Senators BROWN, JAUCH, ZIEN, HARSDORF, SCHULTZ, BRESKE and KAPANKE. Referred to Committee on Senate Organization.

1	Relating to: memorializing Congress to support H. R. 3318, the Railroad Antitrust
2	and Competition Enhancement Act.
3	Whereas, freight rail service in Wisconsin is vital to the health of our state's
4	economy, with major impacts on agriculture, forest products, utilities, and
5	manufacturing, affecting consumer pocketbooks, as well as economic development
6	and jobs; and
7	Whereas, in 1980, when Congress deregulated most railroad activities, the
8	United States had 40 major railroads, but today there are only 7 Class I railroads and
9	4 of those control 90 percent of the nation's freight rail traffic; and
10	Whereas, the concentration of rail service among fewer carriers has led to more
11	"captive shippers," customers with one railroad as their only transportation option,
12	and has recently led to dramatically increasing transportation costs for rail service
13	to bulk commodity industries; and
14	Whereas, the freight rail industry enjoys both freedom from extensive federal
15	regulation and an exemption from the federal antitrust laws, creating an

1	uncompetitive environment that hampers the development of competitive forces
2	that might restrain transportation price increases; and
3	Whereas, electric power suppliers to Wisconsin consumers are a key component
4	of a healthy Wisconsin economy, and heavily rely upon rail service for fuel delivery,
5	and they are incurring dramatically increased rail service costs and a declining
6	quality of rail service with utilities reporting near doubling of rail rates for moving
7	coal to electric generators; and
8	Whereas, higher rail rates and deteriorating service have greatly affected
9	agriculture, the state's number one industry, by restraining the ability of our state's
10	farmers to remain competitive in the global marketplace; and
11	Whereas, Wisconsin Representative Mark Green has authored, and Wisconsin
12	Representative Tammy Baldwin has cosponsored, H.R. 3318, a bill to repeal the
13	antitrust exemption applicable to the freight rail industry, a privilege enjoyed by
14	very few American businesses; now, therefore, be it
15	Resolved by the senate, That the members of the Wisconsin senate support
16	legislation in Congress to repeal the current antitrust exemption of the railroad
17	industry from the nation's antitrust laws in order to increase competition and

- 2 -

18 ultimately lower prices to benefit our Wisconsin economy and consumers.

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(END)