



## Freight Rail Customer Alliance

### Fiscal Year 2022 Budget and Appropriations Surface Transportation Board

#### FRCA Position

FRCA continues to support the highest annual appropriated level possible for the Surface Transportation Board (STB or Board), particularly the level needed to update and enhance the Board's information technology (IT) and data needs to better ensure transparency, consistency, timeliness, and ease of access.

For Fiscal Year 2022, FRCA is advocating for the highest appropriated amount possible for the STB.

Most recently, FRCA successfully advocated for the following appropriated funding levels and accompanying report language addressing shipper concerns regarding the continued delays in regulatory proceedings, a lack of a full complement of Board Members, service problems, and a greater use of Cost Benefit Analysis in Fiscal Years (FYs):

2021 – \$37.5 million, as recommended in the Administration's Budget.

2020 – \$37.1 million, as recommended in the Administration's Budget.

2019 – \$37.1 million (of which \$2.797 million to be directed to IT upgrades), as recommended in the President's budget.

Refer to the *FRCA FY 2021 Surface Transportation Board Side-by-Side* for details, which follows this document.

#### Issue Background

The STB requires adequate resources to perform key functions: rail rate reasonableness oversight; processing of rail consolidations, licensing, and other restructuring proposals; and, the resolution of non-rail matters.

For the first time, the Board is now operating with a full complement of Board Members (as allowed for under the *STB Reauthorization Act of 2105*). It anticipates a steady, and potentially increased workload given its important statutory responsibilities, including those under the Interstate Commerce Act and the *STB Reauthorization Act of 2015*. In addition to meeting shortened rate case processing deadlines, the Board is exploring options to improve its rate case methodologies for all shippers, as well as working to improve the timeliness of its decisions generally.

As such the annual Presidential Budget requests have been devoted primarily for basic operating expenses, including salaries and benefits, rent, security, and activities associated with carrying out its mandated responsibilities, which are largely driven by the number and types of cases filed.

#### Status

On April 9, President Biden released the Administration's FY 2022 Discretionary Budget Outline: <https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/FY2022-Discretionary-Request.pdf>

While some independent Federal agencies are discussed in this outline, the STB is not. It is expected that President Biden will release the Administration's actual FY 2022 Budget in the coming weeks or months which should provide much more detail including a budget recommendation for the STB.

The FY 2022 begins October 1, 2021.