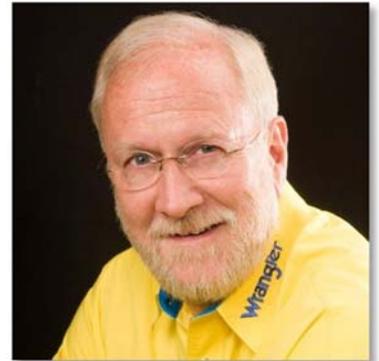


TRANSPORTATION REPORT

From: Terry Whiteside

Date: April 20, 2016



Rail Customer Coalition Honors Senator Thune for Improving Freight Rail Service with First Annual *Murdo MacKenzie* Award for advancing public policies that improve freight rail service and the American economy



U.S. Sen. John Thune (R-S.D.), chairman of the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation, was honored Tuesday night with the first annual Murdo MacKenzie Award for advancing public policies that improve freight rail service and the American economy, including the passage and stewardship of S808, The Surface Transportation Board Reauthorization Act of 2015. The award was presented by the Rail Customer Coalition (RCC) of which the Alliance for Rail Competition (ACC) is a founding member. The RCC is comprised of associations representing manufacturing, agriculture, and energy freight rail customers.

*From a national press release by the Senate Commerce Committee, "I am honored to receive this award for my efforts on behalf of Americans who depend on railroads for shipments and deliveries," **said Thune.** "While we still have work to do, the reforms we enacted to the Surface Transportation Board help address many frustrations in the oversight of the freight rail industry in States like South Dakota.*

Last year, Sen. Thune led the first successful effort to reform the Surface Transportation Board (STB), the federal regulatory body responsible for economic oversight of the nation's freight rail system, and also helped avert the negative economic effects of a railroad service shutdown by extending the deadline of a federal requirement for the implementation of [positive train control](#) technology.

Murdo MacKenzie (1850-1939), the namesake of the award, was the head of Matador Land and Cattle, the founding president of the American Stock Growers Association, and a prominent advocate for railroad customers. His testimony before the Commerce Committee in 1905 was instrumental in the passage of the Hepburn Act of 1906, one of the centerpiece freight rail regulation laws of the 20th century. Sen. Thune's hometown, Murdo, South Dakota, on the old Milwaukee Road rail route, was named after Mr. MacKenzie.

From Michael Meenan, ACC, with permission, "Sen. Thune was appreciative of the award-- he even brought a picture of his ancestors from Murdo, SD on a railcar.

"Thune also read a quote from Murdo MacKenzie testifying before the Senate Commerce Committee in 1903 demonstrating that this is not a new issue for rail shippers:

"What show has he to go into the courts to make the railroads pay for this? He has none; and even if he does succeed it takes him years to get it, and it costs him more than the whole thing is worth."

GOOD NEWS: There was also some good news yesterday that the Senate THUD appropriations bill included a \$4.6m increase for the STB-- well above even what the RCC has been advocating for in the appropriations Committees. RCC will continue to work the House side, but this is a significant step towards our goal of ensuring the STB is fully funded. We understand some of the funds are designated for much-needed technology upgrades at the Board. Thank -

you especially to Mike Friedberg from Holland & Knight for their efforts on this issue.

Last week, Sen. Thune and Commerce Committee member Sen. Roger Wicker (R-Miss.) were honored for their efforts to advance a more robust rail system with the “Golden Spike” award from the National Association of Railroad Passengers (NARP).