

The transaction may be consummated on or after December 25, 2025, the effective date of the exemption (30 days after the verified notice was filed).

As a condition to this exemption, any employees affected by the acquisition of the trackage rights will be protected by the conditions imposed in *Norfolk & Western Railway—Trackage Rights—Burlington Northern, Inc.*, 354 I.C.C. 605 (1978), as modified in *Mendocino Coast Railway—Lease & Operate—California Western Railroad*, 360 I.C.C. 653 (1980).

If the verified notice contains false or misleading information, the exemption is void ab initio. Petitions to revoke the exemption under 49 U.S.C. 10502(d) may be filed at any time. The filing of a petition to revoke will not automatically stay the effectiveness of the exemption. Petitions for stay must be filed no later than December 18, 2025 (at least seven days before the exemption becomes effective).

All pleadings, referring to Docket No. FD 36869, must be filed with the Surface Transportation Board either via e-filing on the Board's website or in writing addressed to 395 E Street SW, Washington, DC 20423-0001. In addition, a copy of each pleading must be served on IANR's representative, Thomas J. Litwiler, Fletcher & Sippel LLC, 29 North Wacker Drive, Suite 800, Chicago, IL 60606-3208.

According to IANR, this action is categorically excluded from environmental review under 49 CFR 1105.6(c) and from historic preservation reporting requirements under 49 CFR 1105.8(b).

Board decisions and notices are available at www.stb.gov.

Decided: December 8, 2025.

By the Board, Anika S. Cooper, Chief Counsel, Office of Chief Counsel.

Brendetta Jones,
Clearance Clerk.

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exemption under 49 CFR 1180.2(d)(7) to extend its existing trackage rights on CEDR's rail line, pursuant to the same amendment to the trackage rights agreement. *See Chi., Cent. & Pac. R.R.—Trackage Rts. Exemption—Cedar River R.R.*, Docket No. FD 36722 (Sub-No. 1). According to the verified notice, the amended trackage rights agreement admits IANR to the same CEDR line over which CCP holds or is obtaining trackage rights.

SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BOARD

[Docket No. 36722 (Sub-No. 1)]

Chicago, Central & Pacific Railroad Company—Amended Trackage Rights Exemption—Cedar River Railroad Company

Chicago, Central & Pacific Railroad Company (CCP) has filed a verified notice of exemption under 49 CFR 1180.2(d)(7) to acquire limited local trackage rights over a line of railroad of Cedar River Railroad Company (CEDR),¹ between milepost 41.5 in Charles City, Iowa, and milepost 85.0 in London Township, Minn. (the Line), a distance of approximately 43.5 miles.²

According to the verified notice, CCP acquired overhead trackage rights on CEDR's rail line between Mona Junction and Charles City in 2023.³ CCP states that, on November 3, 2025, it entered into an amended trackage rights agreement with CEDR to permit CCP to acquire extended, limited local trackage rights over the Line so that CCP may operate trains with its own crews to and from an ethanol facility of Absolute Energy LLC (or any successor entity) on CEDR's line at Mona/St. Ansgar, Iowa, as well as to serve other facilities on CEDR's line that tender or receive "co-load" traffic in blocks of at least 25 cars that are combined into unit trains for movement to or from a single off-line location. CCP states that the trackage rights are intended to provide operational flexibility and reliability in service to customers.⁴

The transaction may be consummated on or after December 25, 2025, the

¹ The verified notice states that CCP and CEDR are indirect rail carrier subsidiaries of Canadian National Railway Company (CNR), whose U.S. rail carrier subsidiaries (including CCP and CEDR) are held directly or indirectly by CNR's wholly owned subsidiary Grand Trunk Corporation. *See Can. Nat'l Ry.—Control—Ill. Cent. Corp.*, 4 S.T.B. 122 (1999); *see also Ill. Cent. Corp.—Control—CCP Holdings, Inc.*, FD 32858 (STB served May 14, 1996).

² As explained by CCP in its verified notice, CCP operates approximately 725 miles of rail line between Chicago, Ill., and Council Bluffs/Sioux City, Iowa, and CEDR owns approximately 100 miles of rail line extending north from Cedar Falls, Iowa, through Charles City, to Glenville, Minn. The verified notice states that CEDR and CCP connect at Mona Junction in Cedar Falls.

³ *See Chi., Cent. & Pac. R.R.—Trackage Rts. Exemption—Cedar River R.R.*, FD 36722 (STB served Sept. 15, 2023) (acquiring overhead trackage rights over approximately 41.5 miles of rail line owned by CEDR between milepost 0.0 at Mona Junction and milepost 41.5 in Charles City).

⁴ CCP states that the amended trackage rights agreement also provides for Iowa Northern Railway Company (IANR), a CCP/CEDR affiliate, to obtain new trackage rights over CEDR's line that overlap with the trackage rights currently held and to be obtained by CCP. The IANR trackage rights transaction is the subject of a separate proceeding. *See Iowa N. Ry.—Trackage Rts. Exemption—Cedar River R.R.*, Docket No. 36869.

effective date of the exemption (30 days after the verified notice was filed).

As a condition to this exemption, any employees affected by the acquisition of the trackage rights will be protected by the conditions imposed in *Norfolk & Western Railway—Trackage Rights—Burlington Northern, Inc.*, 354 I.C.C. 605 (1978), as modified in *Mendocino Coast Railway—Lease & Operate—California Western Railroad*, 360 I.C.C. 653 (1980).

If the verified notice contains false or misleading information, the exemption is void ab initio. Petitions to revoke the exemption under 49 U.S.C. 10502(d) may be filed at any time. The filing of a petition to revoke will not automatically stay the effectiveness of the exemption. Petitions for stay must be filed no later than December 18, 2025 (at least seven days before the exemption becomes effective).

All pleadings, referring to Docket No. FD 36722 (Sub No. 1), must be filed with the Surface Transportation Board either via e-filing on the Board's website or in writing addressed to 395 E Street SW, Washington, DC 20423-0001. In addition, a copy of each pleading must be served on CCP's representative, Thomas J. Litwiler, Fletcher & Sippel LLC, 29 North Wacker Drive, Suite 800, Chicago, IL 60606-3208.

According to CCP, this action is categorically excluded from environmental review under 49 CFR 1105.6(c) and from historic preservation reporting requirements under 49 CFR 1105.8(b).

Board decisions and notices are available at www.stb.gov.

Decided: December 8, 2025.

By the Board, Anika S. Cooper, Chief Counsel, Office of Chief Counsel.

Brendetta Jones,
Clearance Clerk.

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OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES TRADE REPRESENTATIVE

[Docket Number USTR-2025-0243]

Request for Comments and Notice of a Public Hearing Regarding the 2026 Special 301 Review

AGENCY: Office of the United States Trade Representative.

ACTION: Request for comments and notice of public hearing.

SUMMARY: Each year, the Office of the United States Trade Representative (USTR) conducts a review to identify countries that deny adequate and effective protection of intellectual

property (IP) rights or deny fair and equitable market access to U.S. persons who rely on IP protection. Based on this review, the U.S. Trade Representative determines which, if any, of these countries to identify as Priority Foreign Countries. USTR requests written comments that identify acts, policies, or practices that may form the basis of a country's identification as a Priority Foreign Country or placement on the Priority Watch List or Watch List.

DATES:

January 28, 2026 at 11:59 p.m. EST: Deadline for submission of written comments, hearing statements, and notices of intent to appear at the hearing from the public.

February 11, 2026 at 11:59 p.m. EST: Deadline for submission of written comments, hearing statements, and notices of intent to appear at the hearing from foreign governments.

February 18, 2026: The Special 301 Subcommittee (Subcommittee) will hold a public hearing at the Office of the United State Trade Representative, 1724 F Street NW, Rooms 1&2, Washington, DC. If necessary, the hearing may continue on the next business day. Those who intend to testify at the public hearing must submit a notice of intent to appear by the deadlines stated above. Please consult the USTR website at <https://ustr.gov/issue-areas/intellectual-property/Special-301>, for confirmation of the date and location and the schedule of witnesses.

February 25, 2026 at 11:59 p.m. EST: Deadline for submission of post-hearing written comments from persons who testified at the public hearing.

On or about April 30, 2026: USTR will publish the 2026 Special 301 Report within 30 days of the publication of the National Trade Estimate Report.

ADDRESSES: USTR strongly encourages electronic submissions made through the Federal eRulemaking Portal: <https://www.regulations.gov> (*Regulations.gov*). Follow the submission instructions in section IV below. The docket number is USTR-2025-0243. For alternatives to online submissions, please contact USTR at *Special301@ustr.eop.gov* before transmitting a comment and in advance of the relevant deadline.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Claire Avery-Page, Director for Innovation and Intellectual Property, at *Special301@ustr.eop.gov* or (202) 395-6862. You can find information about the Special 301 Review at <https://www.ustr.gov>.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Background

Section 182 of the Trade Act of 1974 (Trade Act) (19 U.S.C. 2242), commonly known as the Special 301 provisions, requires the U.S. Trade Representative to identify countries that deny adequate and effective IP protections or fair and equitable market access to U.S. persons who rely on IP protection. The Trade Act requires the U.S. Trade Representative to determine which, if any, of these countries to identify as Priority Foreign Countries. Acts, policies, or practices that are the basis of a country's identification as a Priority Foreign Country can be subject to the procedures set out in sections 301–305 of the Trade Act (19 U.S.C. 2411–2415).

In addition, USTR has created a Priority Watch List and Watch List to assist in pursuing the goals of the Special 301 provisions. Placement of a trading partner on the Priority Watch List or Watch List indicates that particular problems exist in that country with respect to IP protection, enforcement, or market access for persons who rely on intellectual property protection. Trading partners placed on the Priority Watch List are the focus of increased bilateral engagement concerning the problem areas.

USTR chairs the Subcommittee, which reviews information from many sources, and consults with and makes recommendations to the U.S. Trade Representative on issues arising under Special 301. Written submissions from the public are a key source of information for the Special 301 review process. In 2026, USTR will conduct a public hearing as part of the review process and will allow hearing participants to provide additional information relevant to the review. At the conclusion of the process, USTR will publish the results of the review in a Special 301 Report.

USTR requests that interested persons identify through the process outlined in this notice those countries whose acts, policies, or practices deny adequate and effective protection for IP rights or deny fair and equitable market access to U.S. persons who rely on IP protection. The Special 301 provisions also require the U.S. Trade Representative to identify any act, policy, or practice of Canada that affects cultural industries, was adopted or expanded after December 17, 1992, and is actionable under Article 32.6 of the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA) (as defined in section 3 of the USMCA Implementation Act). USTR invites the public to submit views relevant to this aspect of the review.

The Special 301 provisions require the U.S. Trade Representative to identify all such acts, policies, or practices within 30 days of the publication of the National Trade Estimate Report. In accordance with this statutory requirement, USTR will publish the annual Special 301 Report on or about April 30, 2026.

II. Public Comments

To facilitate this year's review, written comments should be as detailed as possible and provide all necessary information to identify and assess the effect of the acts, policies, and practices. USTR invites written comments that provide specific references to laws, regulations, policy statements, including innovation policies, executive, presidential, or other orders, and administrative, court, or other determinations that should factor into the review. USTR also requests that, where relevant, submissions mention particular regions, provinces, states, or other subdivisions of a country in which an act, policy, or practice is believed to warrant special attention. Finally, submissions proposing countries for review should include data, loss estimates, and other information regarding the economic impact on the United States, U.S. industry, and the U.S. workforce caused by the denial of adequate and effective intellectual property protection. Comments that include quantitative loss claims should include the methodology used to calculate the estimated losses.

III. Public Hearing

The Special 301 Subcommittee will convene a public hearing on February 18, 2026, in Rooms 1 and 2, 1724 F Street NW, Washington, DC, at which interested persons, including representatives of foreign governments, may appear to provide oral testimony. If necessary, the hearing may continue on the next business day. Because the hearing will take place in federal facilities, attendees must present REAL ID-compliant state-issued identification or other acceptable identification and will be screened for security purposes. Please consult the USTR website at <https://ustr.gov/issue-areas/intellectual-property/Special-301>, to confirm the date and location of the hearing and to obtain copies of the hearing schedule. USTR also will post the transcript and recording of the hearing on the USTR website as soon after the hearing as possible.

Witnesses must deliver prepared oral testimony, which is limited to five minutes, before the Special 301 Subcommittee in person and in English.

Subcommittee member agencies may ask questions following the prepared statement. Witnesses not from foreign governments must submit a notice of intent to testify and a hearing statement by January 28, 2026, and foreign government witnesses must submit a notice of intent to testify and a hearing statement by February 11, 2026. The submissions must be in English and must include: (1) The name, address, telephone number, email address, and firm or affiliation of the individual wishing to testify, and (2) a hearing statement that is relevant to the Special 301 review.

IV. Submission Instructions

All submissions must be in English and sent electronically via *Regulations.gov* using docket number USTR-2025-0243. To submit comments, locate the docket (folder) by entering the number USTR-2025-0243 in the 'search for dockets and documents on agency actions' window at the *Regulations.gov* home page and click 'search.' The site will provide a search-results page listing all documents associated with this docket. Locate the reference to this notice by selecting 'notice' under 'document type' on the left side of the search-results page, and click on the link entitled 'comment'.

USTR requests that you provide comments in an attached document, and that you name the file according to the following protocol: Commenter Name or Organization_2026 Special 301_Review_Comment, or Notice of Intent to Testify or Hearing Statement. Please include the following information in the 'start typing comment here' field: '2026 Special 301 Review' and whether the submission is a comment, a request to testify at the hearing, or a hearing statement. Please submit documents prepared in (or compatible with) Microsoft Word (.doc) or Adobe Acrobat (.pdf) formats. If you prepare the submission in a compatible format, please indicate the name of the relevant software application in the 'start typing comment here' field. For further information on using *Regulations.gov*, please select 'FAQ' on the bottom of any page.

Please do not attach separate cover letters to electronic submissions; rather, include any information that might appear in a cover letter in the comments themselves. Similarly, to the extent possible, please include any exhibits, annexes, or other attachments in the same file as the comment itself, rather than submitting them as separate files.

For any comments that contain BCI, the file name of the business confidential version should begin with

the characters 'BCI'. Any page containing BCI must be clearly marked 'BUSINESS CONFIDENTIAL' on the top of that page and the submission should clearly indicate, via brackets, highlighting, or other means, the specific information that is business confidential. A filer requesting business confidential treatment must certify that the information is business confidential and that they would not customarily release it to the public. Additionally, the filer should type 'business confidential' in the 'start typing comment here' field. Filers of comments containing BCI also must submit a public version of their comments. The file name of the public version should begin with the character 'P'. The 'BCI' and 'P' should be followed by the name of the person or entity submitting the comments. Filers submitting comments containing no BCI should name their file using the name of the person or entity submitting the comments.

As noted, USTR strongly urges commenters to submit comments through *Regulations.gov*. You must make any alternative arrangements before transmitting a document and in advance of the relevant deadline by contacting USTR at *Special301@ustr.eop.gov*.

USTR will place comments in the docket and they will be open to public inspection, except properly designated BCI. You can view comments on *Regulations.gov* by entering Docket Number USTR-2025-0243 in the 'search' field on the home page.

Daniel Lee,

Assistant U.S. Trade Representative for Innovation and Intellectual Property, Office of the United States Trade Representative.

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

[Docket # FAA-2025-1056]

Airport Terminal Program; FY 2026 Funding Opportunity

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Department of Transportation (DOT).

ACTION: Notice of funding opportunity.

SUMMARY: The Department of Transportation (DOT), Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) announces the opportunity to apply for approximately \$1 billion in Fiscal Year (FY) 2026 competitive funds for the Airport Terminal Program (ATP), made

available under the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act of 2021 (IIJA), Pub. L. 117-58. The FY 2026 ATP announcement will be the final announcement for this program. The purpose of the ATP is to make annual grants available to eligible airports for airport terminal and airport-owned Airport Traffic Control Tower (ATCT) development projects that address the aging infrastructure of our nation's airports.

DATES: Airport sponsors seeking consideration for FY 2026 ATP Competitive Grant Program funding should submit FAA Form 5100-144 as soon as possible, but no later than 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time on, January 15, 2026.

ADDRESSES: Submit applications electronically at <https://www.faa.gov/iija/airport-terminals> by following the instructions under Frequently Asked Questions, "How to apply."

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Dan Neumann, Acting Manager, FAA Office of Airports IIJA Infrastructure Branch (APP-540), at (202)267-8328 or *IIJA.Airports@faa.gov*.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: IIJA established the ATP as a competitive grant program which provides approximately \$1 billion in grant funding annually for five years (FYs 2022-2026) to upgrade, modernize, and rebuild our nation's airport terminals and airport-owned ATCTs. This funding opportunity (FY 2026) is for the final year in which ATP will be available.

The full text of the Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) is available on the FAA's website at <https://www.faa.gov/iija/airport-terminals>. For more information applicants may also search *Grants.gov* using Funding Opportunity Number FAA-ARP-IIJA-G-26-001 or Assistance Listing Number 20.118. Mail and fax submissions will not be accepted.

Issued in Washington, DC, on December 9, 2025

Dan Neumann,

Acting Manager, FAA Office of Airports IIJA Infrastructure Branch, APP-540.

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