

Issued in Washington, DC, on November 28, 1997.

Janice L. Peters,

Designated Official.

[FR Doc. 97-31934 Filed 12-4-97; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Highway Administration

Environmental Impact Statement: Traverse City, Michigan

AGENCY: Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), DOT.

ACTION: Notice of intent.

SUMMARY: The FHWA is issuing this notice to advise the public that an Environmental Impact Statement will be prepared for the proposed construction of a new Boardman River crossing with a connection between US-31 south of Traverse City and US-31 east of Traverse City, Grand Traverse County, Michigan. The project will provide an alternate route around Traverse City which may function as a local, interim by-pass for Traverse City. The proposed project will mostly follow existing roadways in the Traverse City area.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Mr. James Kirschensteiner, Environmental Programs and Field Operations Engineer, Federal Highway Administration, 315 W. Allegan Street, Lansing, Michigan 48933, Telephone (517) 377-1880 or Mr. Mark Dionise, Urban Program Manager, Local Agency Programs, Bureau of Highways, Michigan Department of Transportation, P.O. Box 30050, Lansing, Michigan 48909, Telephone (517) 373-9570.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The FHWA in cooperation with the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT), and the Grand Traverse County Road Commission, is preparing an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the proposed construction of a new Boardman River crossing with a connection between US-31 south of Traverse City and US-31 east of Traverse City, Michigan. The proposed project will replace the existing one-lane Cass Road Bridge over the Boardman River with a new bridge with connections to US-31 both south of and east of Traverse City. The completion of this project will provide an alternate route around Traverse City and will relieve congestion on US-31 through downtown Traverse City. The existing Cass Road Bridge will remain in place, but will be closed to traffic upon completion of the project.

The alternatives under consideration include (1) No Build, (2) the reconstruction and connection of Hartman and Hammond Roads along with the study of a suitable connection to US-31 east of Traverse City, and (3) Transportation System Management (TSM) improvements to existing roads in the study area to relieve congestion.

An Environmental Assessment had been prepared for the replacement of the Cass Road Bridge which is located on the Boardman River dam. The Cass Road Bridge and Boardman dam complex has been determined to be eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. The Environmental Assessment analyzed the social, environmental, and economic impacts of various alternative locations for replacement of the Cass Road Bridge. A preferred alternative for a new bridge across the Boardman River, connecting Hartman Road with Hammond Road, upgrading Hartman Road from two lanes to four and five lanes with a new intersection location at U-31, upgrading Hammond Road from two lanes to four and five lanes, and closing the existing Cass Road Bridge was presented at a public hearing on June 24, 1997. As a result of the public hearing, it was determined to revise the scope of the proposed project to include alternatives to connect this project with US-31 east of Traverse City and to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement on this proposed action. A scoping document will be prepared describing the proposed action to solicit comments from appropriate Federal, State, and local agencies. Citizen involvement is also being solicited in the process. A public hearing will be held on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement. Public notice will be given of the time and place of the hearing. The Draft EIS will be available for public and agency review and comment prior to the public hearing.

Comments, and suggestions are invited from all interested parties to ensure that the full range of issues related to this proposed action are addressed and all significant issues identified. Comments or questions concerning this proposed action and the EIS should be directed to the FHWA at the address provided above.

(Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Program Number 20.205, Highway Research, Planning and Construction. The regulations implementing Executive Order 12372 regarding intergovernmental consultation on Federal programs and activities apply to this program.)

Issued on: November 25, 1997.

James J. Steele,

Division Administrator, Lansing, Michigan.

[FR Doc. 97-31908 Filed 12-4-97; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Surface Transportation Board

[STB Finance Docket No. 33506]

Coach USA, Inc.—Control Exemption— Browder Tours, Inc. and El Expreso, Inc.

AGENCY: Surface Transportation Board, DOT.

ACTION: Notice of filing of Petition for Exemption.

SUMMARY: Coach USA, Inc. (Coach), a noncarrier in control of 28 motor passenger carriers at the time of filing its petition,¹ seeks an exemption under 49 U.S.C. 13541 from the prior approval requirements of 49 U.S.C. 14303(a)(5) to acquire control of Browder Tours, Inc. (Browder) and El Expreso, Inc. (El Expreso), through acquisition of all of the outstanding shares of stock of the two motor passenger carriers.²

DATES: Comments must be filed by January 5, 1998. Petitioner may file a reply by January 14, 1998.

ADDRESSES: Send an original and 10 copies of comments referring to STB Finance Docket No. 33506 to: Surface Transportation Board, Office of the Secretary, Case Control Unit, 1925 K Street, N.W., Washington, DC 20423-0001. Also, send one copy of comments to petitioner's representatives: Betty Jo Christian and David H. Coburn, Steptoe

¹ Coach currently controls the Nation's second largest group of motor passenger carriers. See *Coach USA, Inc.—Control Exemption—America Charters, Ltd.*, STB Finance Docket No. 33393 (STB served Oct. 3, 1997), slip op. at 1. Since the filing of the instant petition on October 31, 1997, Coach has been authorized to acquire control of an additional three motor passenger carriers in *Coach USA, Inc., and Leisure Time Tours—Control and Merger Exemption—Van Nortwick Bros., Inc., The Arrow Line, Inc., and Trentway-Wager, Inc.*, STB Finance Docket No. 33428 (STB served Nov. 13, 1997).

In addition to the instant petition, Coach has two other pending petitions: *Coach USA, Inc. and K-T Contract Services, Inc.—Control and Merger Exemption—Gray Line Tours of Southern Nevada*, STB Finance Docket No. 33431 (STB served Aug. 22, 1997), in which it seeks an exemption to acquire control of one additional motor passenger carrier, and *Coach USA, Inc.—Control Exemption—Air Travel, Inc.; Airlines Acquisition Co., Inc.; and Transportation Management Services, Inc.*, STB Finance Docket No. 33471 (STB served Nov. 14, 1997), in which it seeks to acquire control of three additional motor passenger carriers.

² The stock of Browder and El Expreso was placed in an independent voting trust to avoid any unlawful control pending disposition of this proceeding.

& Johnson LLP, 1330 Connecticut Avenue, N.W., Washington, DC 20036.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Joseph H. Dettmar, (202) 565-1600 [TDD for the hearing impaired: (202) 565-1695.]

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Coach, a noncarrier, seeks an exemption to acquire control of two motor carriers of passengers: (1) Browder Tours, Inc. (MC-236290), a Tennessee corporation that is authorized to operate as a common carrier of passengers in interstate commerce over irregular routes transporting passengers in charter and special services between points in the United States, other than Alaska and Hawaii;³ and (2) El Expreso, Inc. (MC-244195), a Texas-based corporation that is authorized to operate as a common carrier of passengers in interstate commerce over regular routes transporting passengers between various points within Texas, including points on the U.S./Mexico border, as well as between points in several southeastern states.⁴

Coach reported, at the time it filed this petition for exemption, that it controlled 28 motor carriers of passengers. Coach claims that its acquisition of control of the two motor carriers through the acquisition of their stock will not inhibit competition or reduce transportation options available to the public. Coach asserts that the two

carriers do not compete with any Coach-owned carrier.

Petitioner also claims that the acquisition of control of the two carriers will allow each carrier to offer improved service at lower costs. This will be made possible by the coordination of functions, centralized management, financial support, rationalization of resources, and economies of scale that are anticipated from the common control. Coach also states that all collective bargaining agreements will be honored and that employee benefits will improve. Additional information may be obtained from petitioner's representatives.

A copy of this notice will be served on the Department of Justice, Antitrust Division, 10th Street and Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W., Washington, DC 20530.

Decided: November 25, 1997.

By the Board, Chairman Morgan and Vice Chairman Owen.

Vernon A. Williams,

Secretary.

[FR Doc. 97-31922 Filed 12-4-97; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Surface Transportation Board

[STB Finance Docket No. 33518]

Burlington Shortline, Inc., d/b/a Burlington Junction Railway— Acquisition and Operation Exemption—The Burlington Northern and Santa Fe Railway Company

Burlington Shortline, Inc., d/b/a Burlington Junction Railway (BSL), a Class III rail carrier, has filed a verified

notice of exemption under 49 CFR 1150.41 to acquire and operate approximately 9,205 feet, or 1.74 miles, of rail line owned by The Burlington Northern and Santa Fe Railway Company (BNSF) between a point 247 feet south of BNSF's mainline switch east of BNSF's equipment maintenance facility at Burlington, IA, and a point 9,452 feet south of BNSF's mainline switch, in the vicinity of Burlington, Des Moines County, Iowa. BSL will interchange traffic with BNSF at Burlington.

The transaction was expected to be consummated on or after the November 24, 1997 effective date of the exemption.

If the 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 transaction.

An original and 10 copies of all pleadings, referring to STB Finance Docket No. 33518, must be filed with the Surface Transportation Board, Office of the Secretary, Case Control Unit, 1925 K Street, N.W., Washington, DC 20423-0001. In addition, a copy of each pleading must be served on: John D. Heffner, Rea, Cross & Auchincloss, Suite 420, 1920 N Street, N.W., Washington, DC 20036.

Decided: December 1, 1997.

By the Board, David M. Konschnik, Director, Office of Proceedings.

Vernon A. Williams,

Secretary.

[FR Doc. 97-31921 Filed 12-4-97; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4915-00-P

³ Browder focuses on tour and charter operations in Tennessee and nearby states.

⁴ El Expreso focuses on providing service to persons traveling between Mexico and the United States, as well as to persons traveling between Texas and other states.