The Railroads’ Collective Bargaining Structure and Environment: A Competitive Analysis

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Railroad labor-management relations are governed not by the National Labor Relations Act (NLRA) but by the Railway Labor Act (RLA). The differences between these two acts are, however, only a partial – even though important – explanation of the uniqueness of railroad collective bargaining. Additionally, other highly influential explanations are found in the peculiar external and internal environments of the industry vis-à-vis the collective bargaining process.

The purpose of this paper is to analyze the railroads’ collective bargaining structure and environment which establish the competitiveness milieu of the railroad industry and provide the background necessary for a proper understanding of the industry’s issues in the area of competitiveness.

Keywords: Competitiveness, Railroads, Labor-management relations