

SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BOARD**[Docket No. EP 290 (Sub-No. 5) (2024–3)]****Quarterly Rail Cost Adjustment Factor****AGENCY:** Surface Transportation Board.**ACTION:** Approval of rail cost adjustment factor.**SUMMARY:** The Surface Transportation Board has adopted the third quarter 2024 Rail Cost Adjustment Factor and cost index filed by the Association of American Railroads.**DATES:** *Applicability Date:* July 1, 2024.**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:**

Pedro Ramirez, (202) 245–0333. If you require an accommodation under the Americans with Disabilities Act, please call (202) 245–0245.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The rail cost adjustment factor (RCAF) is an index formulated to represent changes in railroad costs incurred by the nation's largest railroads over a specified period of time. Under 49 U.S.C. 10708, the Surface Transportation Board (Board) is required to publish the RCAF on at least a quarterly basis. Each quarter, the Association of American Railroads computes three types of RCAF figures and submits those figures to the Board for approval. The Board has reviewed the submission and adopts the RCAF figures for the third quarter of 2024. The third quarter 2024 RCAF (Unadjusted) is 0.950. The third quarter 2024 RCAF (Adjusted) is 0.372. The third quarter 2024 RCAF–5 is 0.353. Additional information is contained in the Board's decision, which is available at www.stb.gov.

Decided: June 14, 2024.

By the Board, Board Members Fuchs, Hedlund, Primus, and Schultz.

Kenyatta Clay,*Clearance Clerk.*

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BILLING CODE 4915–01–P**OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES
TRADE REPRESENTATIVE****[Docket Number USTR–2024–0009]****Request for Comments on Americas
Partnership for Economic Prosperity—
Trade Track****AGENCY:** Office of the United States Trade Representative (USTR).**ACTION:** Notice and request for comments.**SUMMARY:** The United States, Barbados, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Mexico,

Panama, Peru and Uruguay have launched the Americas Partnership for Economic Prosperity (Partnership) to deepen economic collaboration and integration in the Western Hemisphere. In November 2023, leaders of these countries issued the East Room Declaration, directing Ministers responsible for trade, foreign affairs and finance each to commence work in their respective areas to fulfill Partnership objectives. USTR is seeking public comments on matters described below, including U.S. interests and priorities, in order to develop trade-related lines of effort in the trade track of the Partnership.

DATES: Submit comments no later than July 22, 2024.**ADDRESSES:** USTR strongly prefers electronic submissions made through the Federal eRulemaking Portal: <http://www.regulations.gov>. See the submission instructions below. The Docket Number is USTR–2024–0009. For alternatives to on-line submissions, please contact the individuals listed below before transmitting a comment and in advance of the deadline.**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:**Courtney Smothers, Deputy Assistant Trade Representative for Latin America, at Courtney.Smothers@ustr.eop.gov, or 202.395.7657, or Randall Oliver, Director for Canada, at Randall.T.Oliver@ustr.eop.gov, 202.395.9449.**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:****I. Background**

President Biden first announced the Partnership at the 2022 Summit of the Americas. On November 3, 2023, the United States welcomed representatives of the founding Partnership countries to the White House for the first Leaders' Summit. Following the Summit, leaders of the United States, Barbados, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Mexico, Panama, Peru and Uruguay released the East Room Declaration, which directs Ministers to begin work in three tracks—Foreign Affairs, Trade, and Finance—to support the Leaders' intention that the Partnership serve as a lasting regional platform to pursue an ambitious, flexible and goal-oriented regional economic and development agenda. Leaders further identified five initial cross-cutting priorities:

- Strengthening regional competitiveness and integration;
- Fostering shared prosperity and good governance;
- Building sustainable infrastructure;
- Protecting the climate and environment; and

- Promoting healthy communities.

Leaders also called on Ministers responsible for trade to develop inclusive and sustainable approaches to trade and investment that will support regional sustainable development and resilient supply chains for goods and services, enhance a predictable and transparent regulatory environment that can boost trade flows, and remove barriers to greater economic integration among our countries.

On March 18, 2024, the Partnership Trade Ministers met virtually. They took note of the work of the Partnership's Council on Trade and Competitiveness (CTC), which is comprised of senior officials for trade. The CTC has established committees on Trade Rules and Transparency, Sustainable Value and Supply Chains, and Inclusive Trade and SMEs.

The Ministers emphasized how the Partnership can complement and build on existing trade ties, further deepen economic integration in the region, and develop sustainable and inclusive approaches to trade and investment. They also recalled Leaders' expectation that the trade agenda under the Partnership promote formal jobs that lead to decent work and promote internationally recognized labor rights, environmental sustainability, and economic inclusion.

Trade Ministers plan to meet in person in Ecuador in August 2024 to review progress by the CTC and discuss priorities for next year. Ministers also will discuss preparation for the Leaders' Summit in Costa Rica in 2025.

II. Public Comment

The Trade Policy Staff Committee (TPSC) invites interested parties to submit comments to assist USTR in the development of priorities and lines of effort consistent with the regional scope and collaborative nature of the Partnership, as elaborated below. Because the Partnership will build on, and coexist with, existing U.S trade agreements, its work should not detract from or unnecessarily duplicate work that is taking place in the committees of existing U.S trade agreements, including free trade agreements, trade and investment framework agreements, and other similar agreements.

USTR is committed to broad and inclusive stakeholder engagement in developing projects for the trade work of the Partnership. In particular, the TPSC invites interested parties to comment on the following matters as they relate to trade and investment:

- Customs and trade facilitation;
- Value and supply chain resilience and sustainability, with particular focus