

shall be recognized with the same effect as having been filed under this section.

(e) Interests with respect to which documents are filed or recognized under this section are deemed perfected in all jurisdictions, and shall be governed by applicable State or foreign law in all matters not specifically governed by this section.

(f) The Board shall collect, maintain, and keep open for public inspection a railway equipment register consistent with the manner and format maintained by the Interstate Commerce Commission as of January 1, 1996.

(Added Pub. L. 104-88, title I, §102(a), Dec. 29, 1995, 109 Stat. 837; amended Pub. L. 104-287, §5(25), Oct. 11, 1996, 110 Stat. 3390.)

#### PRIOR PROVISIONS

Provisions similar to those in this section were contained in section 11303 of this title prior to the general amendment of this subtitle by Pub. L. 104-88, §102(a).

A prior section 11301, Pub. L. 95-473, Oct. 17, 1978, 92 Stat. 1428; Pub. L. 103-429, §6(16), Oct. 31, 1994, 108 Stat. 4379, related to authority of certain carriers to issue securities and assume obligations and liabilities, prior to the general amendment of this subtitle by Pub. L. 104-88, §102(a).

A prior section 11302, Pub. L. 95-473, Oct. 17, 1978, 92 Stat. 1430; Pub. L. 96-296, §18(a), July 1, 1980, 96 Stat. 811, provided that section 11301 of this title applied to motor carriers and corporations subject to jurisdiction of Interstate Commerce Commission under former subchapter II of chapter 105 of this title, but did not apply to corporations under a certain capitalization, and that this section did not apply to Federal, State, or local governments, prior to repeal by Pub. L. 97-261, §§19(a), 31(a), Sept. 20, 1982, 96 Stat. 1121, 1129, effective on the 60th day after Sept. 20, 1982.

Prior sections 11303 and 11304 were omitted in the general amendment of this subtitle by Pub. L. 104-88, §102(a).

Section 11303, Pub. L. 95-473, Oct. 17, 1978, 92 Stat. 1430; Pub. L. 103-272, §5(m)(30), July 5, 1994, 108 Stat. 1378, related to filing and recording of mortgages, leases, equipment trusts, and other agreements with Interstate Commerce Commission. See section 11301 of this title.

Section 11304, Pub. L. 95-473, Oct. 17, 1978, 92 Stat. 1431; Pub. L. 96-258, §1(12), June 3, 1980, 94 Stat. 426, related to security interests in certain motor vehicles. See section 14301 of this title.

#### AMENDMENTS

1996—Subsec. (f). Pub. L. 104-287 substituted “January 1, 1996” for “the effective date of the ICC Termination Act of 1995”.

#### EFFECTIVE DATE

Chapter effective Jan. 1, 1996, except as otherwise provided in Pub. L. 104-88, see section 2 of Pub. L. 104-88, set out as a note under section 701 of this title.

#### ABOLITION OF INTERSTATE COMMERCE COMMISSION

Interstate Commerce Commission abolished by section 101 of Pub. L. 104-88, set out as a note under section 701 of this title.

### SUBCHAPTER II—COMBINATIONS

#### § 11321. Scope of authority

(a) The authority of the Board under this subchapter is exclusive. A rail carrier or corporation participating in or resulting from a transaction approved by or exempted by the Board under this subchapter may carry out the trans-

action, own and operate property, and exercise control or franchises acquired through the transaction without the approval of a State authority. A rail carrier, corporation, or person participating in that approved or exempted transaction is exempt from the antitrust laws and from all other law, including State and municipal law, as necessary to let that rail carrier, corporation, or person carry out the transaction, hold, maintain, and operate property, and exercise control or franchises acquired through the transaction. However, if a purchase and sale, a lease, or a corporate consolidation or merger is involved in the transaction, the carrier or corporation may carry out the transaction only with the assent of a majority, or the number required under applicable State law, of the votes of the holders of the capital stock of that corporation entitled to vote. The vote must occur at a regular meeting, or special meeting called for that purpose, of those stockholders and the notice of the meeting must indicate its purpose.

(b) A power granted under this subchapter to a carrier or corporation is in addition to and changes its powers under its corporate charter and under State law. Action under this subchapter does not establish or provide for establishing a corporation under the laws of the United States.

(Added Pub. L. 104-88, title I, §102(a), Dec. 29, 1995, 109 Stat. 838.)

#### PRIOR PROVISIONS

Provisions similar to those in this section were contained in section 11341 of this title prior to the general amendment of this subtitle by Pub. L. 104-88, §102(a).

A prior section 11321, Pub. L. 95-473, Oct. 17, 1978, 92 Stat. 1432, related to limitations on ownership of certain water carriers, prior to the general amendment of this subtitle by Pub. L. 104-88, §102(a).

#### § 11322. Limitation on pooling and division of transportation or earnings

(a) A rail carrier providing transportation subject to the jurisdiction of the Board under this part may not agree or combine with another of those rail carriers to pool or divide traffic or services or any part of their earnings without the approval of the Board under this section or section 11123 of this title. The Board may approve and authorize the agreement or combination if the rail carriers involved assent to the pooling or division and the Board finds that a pooling or division of traffic, services, or earnings—

(1) will be in the interest of better service to the public or of economy of operation; and

(2) will not unreasonably restrain competition.

(b) The Board may impose conditions governing the pooling or division and may approve and authorize payment of a reasonable consideration between the rail carriers.

(c) The Board may begin a proceeding under this section on its own initiative or on application.

(Added Pub. L. 104-88, title I, §102(a), Dec. 29, 1995, 109 Stat. 838.)

## PRIOR PROVISIONS

Provisions similar to those in this section were contained in section 11342 of this title prior to the general amendment of this subtitle by Pub. L. 104-88, §102(a).

A prior section 11322, Pub. L. 95-473, Oct. 17, 1978, 92 Stat. 1433, related to restrictions on officers and directors of carriers, prior to the general amendment of this subtitle by Pub. L. 104-88, §102(a). See section 11328 of this title.

**§ 11323. Consolidation, merger, and acquisition of control**

(a) The following transactions involving rail carriers providing transportation subject to the jurisdiction of the Board under this part may be carried out only with the approval and authorization of the Board:

(1) Consolidation or merger of the properties or franchises of at least 2 rail carriers into one corporation for the ownership, management, and operation of the previously separately owned properties.

(2) A purchase, lease, or contract to operate property of another rail carrier by any number of rail carriers.

(3) Acquisition of control of a rail carrier by any number of rail carriers.

(4) Acquisition of control of at least 2 rail carriers by a person that is not a rail carrier.

(5) Acquisition of control of a rail carrier by a person that is not a rail carrier but that controls any number of rail carriers.

(6) Acquisition by a rail carrier of trackage rights over, or joint ownership in or joint use of, a railroad line (and terminals incidental to it) owned or operated by another rail carrier.

(b) A person may carry out a transaction referred to in subsection (a) of this section or participate in achieving the control or management, including the power to exercise control or management, in a common interest of more than one of those rail carriers, regardless of how that result is reached, only with the approval and authorization of the Board under this subchapter. In addition to other transactions, each of the following transactions are considered achievements of control or management:

(1) A transaction by a rail carrier that has the effect of putting that rail carrier and person affiliated with it, taken together, in control of another rail carrier.

(2) A transaction by a person affiliated with a rail carrier that has the effect of putting that rail carrier and persons affiliated with it, taken together, in control of another rail carrier.

(3) A transaction by at least 2 persons acting together (one of whom is a rail carrier or is affiliated with a rail carrier) that has the effect of putting those persons and rail carriers and persons affiliated with any of them, or with any of those affiliated rail carriers, taken together, in control of another rail carrier.

(c) A person is affiliated with a rail carrier under this subchapter if, because of the relationship between that person and a rail carrier, it is reasonable to believe that the affairs of another rail carrier, control of which may be acquired by that person, will be managed in the interest of the other rail carrier.

(Added Pub. L. 104-88, title I, §102(a), Dec. 29, 1995, 109 Stat. 838.)

## PRIOR PROVISIONS

Provisions similar to those in this section were contained in section 11343 of this title prior to the general amendment of this subtitle by Pub. L. 104-88, §102(a).

A prior section 11323, Pub. L. 95-473, Oct. 17, 1978, 92 Stat. 1433; Pub. L. 99-521, §10(a), (b)(1), Oct. 22, 1986, 100 Stat. 2997, related to limitation on ownership of other carriers by household goods freight forwarders, prior to the general amendment of this subtitle by Pub. L. 104-88, §102(a).

**§ 11324. Consolidation, merger, and acquisition of control: conditions of approval**

(a) The Board may begin a proceeding to approve and authorize a transaction referred to in section 11323 of this title on application of the person seeking that authority. When an application is filed with the Board, the Board shall notify the chief executive officer of each State in which property of the rail carriers involved in the proposed transaction is located and shall notify those rail carriers. The Board shall hold a public hearing unless the Board determines that a public hearing is not necessary in the public interest.

(b) In a proceeding under this section which involves the merger or control of at least two Class I railroads, as defined by the Board, the Board shall consider at least—

(1) the effect of the proposed transaction on the adequacy of transportation to the public;

(2) the effect on the public interest of including, or failing to include, other rail carriers in the area involved in the proposed transaction;

(3) the total fixed charges that result from the proposed transaction;

(4) the interest of rail carrier employees affected by the proposed transaction; and

(5) whether the proposed transaction would have an adverse effect on competition among rail carriers in the affected region or in the national rail system.

(c) The Board shall approve and authorize a transaction under this section when it finds the transaction is consistent with the public interest. The Board may impose conditions governing the transaction, including the divestiture of parallel tracks or requiring the granting of trackage rights and access to other facilities. Any trackage rights and related conditions imposed to alleviate anticompetitive effects of the transaction shall provide for operating terms and compensation levels to ensure that such effects are alleviated. When the transaction contemplates a guaranty or assumption of payment of dividends or of fixed charges or will result in an increase of total fixed charges, the Board may approve and authorize the transaction only if it finds that the guaranty, assumption, or increase is consistent with the public interest. The Board may require inclusion of other rail carriers located in the area involved in the transaction if they apply for inclusion and the Board finds their inclusion to be consistent with the public interest.

(d) In a proceeding under this section which does not involve the merger or control of at least two Class I railroads, as defined by the

Board, the Board shall approve such an application unless it finds that—

(1) as a result of the transaction, there is likely to be substantial lessening of competition, creation of a monopoly, or restraint of trade in freight surface transportation in any region of the United States; and

(2) the anticompetitive effects of the transaction outweigh the public interest in meeting significant transportation needs.

In making such findings, the Board shall, with respect to any application that is part of a plan or proposal developed under section 333(a)–(d) of this title, accord substantial weight to any recommendations of the Attorney General.

(e) No transaction described in section 11326(b) may have the effect of avoiding a collective bargaining agreement or shifting work from a rail carrier with a collective bargaining agreement to a rail carrier without a collective bargaining agreement.

(f)(1) To the extent provided in this subsection, a proceeding under this subchapter relating to a transaction involving at least one Class I rail carrier shall not be considered an adjudication required by statute to be determined on the record after opportunity for an agency hearing, for the purposes of subchapter II of chapter 5 of title 5, United States Code.

(2) Ex parte communications, as defined in section 551(14) of title 5, United States Code, shall be permitted in proceedings described in paragraph (1) of this subsection, subject to the requirements of paragraph (3) of this subsection.

(3)(A) Any member or employee of the Board who makes or receives a written ex parte communication concerning the merits of a proceeding described in paragraph (1) shall promptly place the communication in the public docket of the proceeding.

(B) Any member or employee of the Board who makes or receives an oral ex parte communication concerning the merits of a proceeding described in paragraph (1) shall promptly place a written summary of the oral communication in the public docket of the proceeding.

(4) Nothing in this subsection shall be construed to require the Board or any of its members or employees to engage in any ex parte communication with any person. Nothing in this subsection or any other law shall be construed to limit the authority of the members or employees of the Board, in their discretion, to note in the docket or otherwise publicly the occurrence and substance of an ex parte communication.

(Added Pub. L. 104–88, title I, §102(a), Dec. 29, 1995, 109 Stat. 839.)

#### PRIOR PROVISIONS

Provisions similar to those in this section were contained in section 11344 of this title prior to the general amendment of this subtitle by Pub. L. 104–88, §102(a).

#### § 11325. Consolidation, merger, and acquisition of control: procedure

(a) The Board shall publish notice of the application under section 11324 in the Federal Register by the end of the 30th day after the application is filed with the Board. However, if the

application is incomplete, the Board shall reject it by the end of that period. The order of rejection is a final action of the Board. The published notice shall indicate whether the application involves—

(1) the merger or control of at least two Class I railroads, as defined by the Board, to be decided within the time limits specified in subsection (b) of this section;

(2) transactions of regional or national transportation significance, to be decided within the time limits specified in subsection (c) of this section; or

(3) any other transaction covered by this section, to be decided within the time limits specified in subsection (d) of this section.

(b) If the application involves the merger or control of two or more Class I railroads, as defined by the Board, the following conditions apply:

(1) Written comments about an application may be filed with the Board within 45 days after notice of the application is published under subsection (a) of this section. Copies of such comments shall be served on the Attorney General and the Secretary of Transportation, who may decide to intervene as a party to the proceeding. That decision must be made by the 15th day after the date of receipt of the written comments, and if the decision is to intervene, preliminary comments about the application must be sent to the Board by the end of the 15th day after the date of receipt of the written comments.

(2) The Board shall require that applications inconsistent with an application, notice of which was published under subsection (a) of this section, and applications for inclusion in the transaction, be filed with it by the 90th day after publication of notice under that subsection.

(3) The Board must conclude evidentiary proceedings by the end of 1 year after the date of publication of notice under subsection (a) of this section. The Board must issue a final decision by the 90th day after the date on which it concludes the evidentiary proceedings.

(c) If the application involves a transaction other than the merger or control of at least two Class I railroads, as defined by the Board, which the Board has determined to be of regional or national transportation significance, the following conditions apply:

(1) Written comments about an application, including comments of the Attorney General and the Secretary of Transportation, may be filed with the Board within 30 days after notice of the application is published under subsection (a) of this section.

(2) The Board shall require that applications inconsistent with an application, notice of which was published under subsection (a) of this section, and applications for inclusion in the transaction, be filed with it by the 60th day after publication of notice under that subsection.

(3) The Board must conclude any evidentiary proceedings by the 180th day after the date of publication of notice under subsection (a) of this section. The Board must issue a final de-

cision by the 90th day after the date on which it concludes the evidentiary proceedings.

(d) For all applications under this section other than those specified in subsections (b) and (c) of this section, the following conditions apply:

(1) Written comments about an application, including comments of the Attorney General and the Secretary of Transportation, may be filed with the Board within 30 days after notice of the application is published under subsection (a) of this section.

(2) The Board must conclude any evidentiary proceedings by the 105th day after the date of publication of notice under subsection (a) of this section. The Board must issue a final decision by the 45th day after the date on which it concludes the evidentiary proceedings.

(Added Pub. L. 104-88, title I, §102(a), Dec. 29, 1995, 109 Stat. 841.)

#### PRIOR PROVISIONS

Provisions similar to those in this section were contained in section 11345 of this title prior to the general amendment of this subtitle by Pub. L. 104-88, §102(a).

### § 11326. Employee protective arrangements in transactions involving rail carriers

(a) Except as otherwise provided in this section, when approval is sought for a transaction under sections 11324 and 11325 of this title, the Board shall require the rail carrier to provide a fair arrangement at least as protective of the interests of employees who are affected by the transaction as the terms imposed under section 5(2)(f) of the Interstate Commerce Act before February 5, 1976, and the terms established under section 24706(c)<sup>1</sup> of this title. Notwithstanding this part, the arrangement may be made by the rail carrier and the authorized representative of its employees. The arrangement and the order approving the transaction must require that the employees of the affected rail carrier will not be in a worse position related to their employment as a result of the transaction during the 4 years following the effective date of the final action of the Board (or if an employee was employed for a lesser period of time by the rail carrier before the action became effective, for that lesser period).

(b) When approval is sought under sections 11324 and 11325 for a transaction involving one Class II and one or more Class III rail carriers, there shall be an arrangement as required under subsection (a) of this section, except that such arrangement shall be limited to one year of severance pay, which shall not exceed the amount of earnings from the railroad employment of that employee during the 12-month period immediately preceding the date on which the application for approval of such transaction is filed with the Board. The amount of such severance pay shall be reduced by the amount of earnings from railroad employment of that employee with the acquiring carrier during the 12-month period immediately following the effective date of the transaction. The parties may agree to terms other than as provided in this subsection.

<sup>1</sup> See References in Text note below.

(c) When approval is sought under sections 11324 and 11325 for a transaction involving only Class III rail carriers, this section shall not apply.

(Added Pub. L. 104-88, title I, §102(a), Dec. 29, 1995, 109 Stat. 842.)

#### REFERENCES IN TEXT

Section 5(2)(f) of the Interstate Commerce Act, referred to in subsec. (a), was classified to section 5(2)(f) of former Title 49, Transportation, prior to repeal and reenactment as section 11347 of this title by Pub. L. 95-473, Oct. 17, 1978, 92 Stat. 1439. Section 11347 of this title was subsequently omitted in the general amendment of this subtitle by Pub. L. 104-88, §102(a).

Section 24706(c) of this title, referred to in subsec. (a), was repealed by Pub. L. 105-134, title I, §142(a), Dec. 2, 1997, 111 Stat. 2576.

#### PRIOR PROVISIONS

Provisions similar to those in this section were contained in section 11347 of this title prior to the general amendment of this subtitle by Pub. L. 104-88, §102(a).

### § 11327. Supplemental orders

When cause exists, the Board may make appropriate orders supplemental to an order made in a proceeding under sections 11322 through 11326 of this title.

(Added Pub. L. 104-88, title I, §102(a), Dec. 29, 1995, 109 Stat. 843.)

#### PRIOR PROVISIONS

Provisions similar to those in this section were contained in section 11351 of this title prior to the general amendment of this subtitle by Pub. L. 104-88, §102(a).

### § 11328. Restrictions on officers and directors

(a) A person may hold the position of officer or director of more than one rail carrier only when authorized by the Board. The Board may authorize a person to hold the position of officer or director of more than one of those carriers when public or private interests will not be adversely affected.

(b) This section shall not apply to an individual holding the position of officer or director only of Class III rail carriers.

(Added Pub. L. 104-88, title I, §102(a), Dec. 29, 1995, 109 Stat. 843.)

#### PRIOR PROVISIONS

Provisions similar to those in this section were contained in section 11322 of this title prior to the general amendment of this subtitle by Pub. L. 104-88, §102(a).

Prior sections 11341 to 11351 and 11361 to 11367 were omitted in the general amendment of this subtitle by Pub. L. 104-88, §102(a).

Section 11341, Pub. L. 95-473, Oct. 17, 1978, 92 Stat. 1434; Pub. L. 97-261, §21(a), Sept. 20, 1982, 96 Stat. 1122, related to exclusive authority of Interstate Commerce Commission under former sections 11341 to 11351 of this title. See sections 11321, 14302, and 14303 of this title.

Section 11342, Pub. L. 95-473, Oct. 17, 1978, 92 Stat. 1434; Pub. L. 96-296, §20, July 1, 1980, 94 Stat. 811; Pub. L. 96-454, §5(c), Oct. 15, 1980, 94 Stat. 2014, related to limitation on pooling and division of transportation or earnings. See sections 11322 and 14302 of this title.

Section 11343, Pub. L. 95-473, Oct. 17, 1978, 92 Stat. 1434; Pub. L. 96-296, §18(b), July 1, 1980, 94 Stat. 811; Pub. L. 97-261, §21(b), Sept. 20, 1982, 96 Stat. 1122, related to consolidation, merger, and acquisition of control. See sections 11323 and 14303 of this title.

Section 11344, Pub. L. 95-473, Oct. 17, 1978, 92 Stat. 1436; Pub. L. 96-448, title II, §228(a)-(c), Oct. 14, 1980, 94 Stat. 1931; Pub. L. 97-261, §21(f), (g), Sept. 20, 1982, 96 Stat. 1123; Pub. L. 98-216, §2(4), Feb. 14, 1984, 98 Stat. 5, related to general procedures and conditions of approval of consolidations, mergers, and acquisitions of control. See sections 11324 and 14303 of this title.

Section 11345, Pub. L. 95-473, Oct. 17, 1978, 92 Stat. 1436; Pub. L. 96-448, title II, §228(d), Oct. 14, 1980, 94 Stat. 1932, related to rail carrier procedures in consolidations, mergers, and acquisitions of control. See section 11325 of this title.

Section 11345a, added Pub. L. 96-296, §27(a), July 1, 1980, 94 Stat. 819; amended Pub. L. 97-261, §21(c), (d), Sept. 20, 1982, 96 Stat. 1123, related to motor carrier procedures in consolidations, mergers, and acquisitions of control. See section 14303 of this title.

Section 11346, Pub. L. 95-473, Oct. 17, 1978, 92 Stat. 1437; Pub. L. 97-449, §5(g)(7), Jan. 12, 1983, 96 Stat. 2443, related to expedited rail carrier procedures in consolidations, mergers, and acquisitions of control.

Section 11347, Pub. L. 95-473, Oct. 17, 1978, 92 Stat. 1439; Pub. L. 98-216, §2(16), Feb. 14, 1984, 98 Stat. 5; Pub. L. 103-272, §5(m)(31), July 5, 1994, 108 Stat. 1378, related to employee protective arrangements in transactions involving rail carriers. See section 11326 of this title.

Section 11348, Pub. L. 95-473, Oct. 17, 1978, 92 Stat. 1439; Pub. L. 96-454, §8(b)(1), Oct. 15, 1980, 94 Stat. 2021; Pub. L. 97-261, §19(b), Sept. 20, 1982, 96 Stat. 1121; Pub. L. 97-449, §5(g)(8), Jan. 12, 1983, 96 Stat. 2443; Pub. L. 98-554, title II, §227(a)(3), Oct. 30, 1984, 98 Stat. 2852; Pub. L. 103-272, §5(m)(32), July 5, 1994, 108 Stat. 1378; Pub. L. 103-429, §6(17), Oct. 31, 1994, 108 Stat. 4379, related to Interstate Commerce Commission authority over noncarriers that acquire control of carriers. See section 14303 of this title.

Section 11349, Pub. L. 95-473, Oct. 17, 1978, 92 Stat. 1439, related to temporary operating approval for transactions involving motor and water carriers. See section 14303 of this title.

Section 11350, Pub. L. 95-473, Oct. 17, 1978, 92 Stat. 1440, related to responsibility of Secretary of Transportation in certain transactions.

Section 11351, added Pub. L. 96-258, §1(13)(A), June 3, 1980, 94 Stat. 427, related to orders by Interstate Commerce Commission supplemental to orders made in proceedings under former sections 11342 to 11345 and 11347 of this title. See sections 11327 and 14303 of this title.

Section 11361, Pub. L. 95-473, Oct. 17, 1978, 92 Stat. 1441; Pub. L. 97-449, §5(g)(9), Jan. 12, 1983, 96 Stat. 2443; Pub. L. 98-216, §2(17), Feb. 14, 1984, 98 Stat. 5, related to exclusive authority of Interstate Commerce Commission over financial structure of carriers.

Section 11362, Pub. L. 95-473, Oct. 17, 1978, 92 Stat. 1441, related to criteria for approval and authority to make changes in carrier financial structure.

Section 11363, Pub. L. 95-473, Oct. 17, 1978, 92 Stat. 1442, related to assent of holders of securities and certain other instruments to changes in carrier financial structure.

Section 11364, Pub. L. 95-473, Oct. 17, 1978, 92 Stat. 1443, related to procedure for obtaining assents of security holders to changes in financial structure.

Section 11365, Pub. L. 95-473, Oct. 17, 1978, 92 Stat. 1443, related to effect of change in financial structure of carrier on other persons.

Section 11366, Pub. L. 95-473, Oct. 17, 1978, 92 Stat. 1443, related to reports by carriers making change in financial structure.

Section 11367, Pub. L. 95-473, Oct. 17, 1978, 92 Stat. 1444; Pub. L. 98-216, §2(18), (19), Feb. 14, 1984, 98 Stat. 5, related to application of certain other laws to proposed changes in financial structure of carriers.

## CHAPTER 115—FEDERAL-STATE RELATIONS

Sec.	
11501.	Tax discrimination against rail transportation property.
11502.	Withholding State and local income tax by rail carriers.

### § 11501. Tax discrimination against rail transportation property

(a) In this section—

(1) the term “assessment” means valuation for a property tax levied by a taxing district;

(2) the term “assessment jurisdiction” means a geographical area in a State used in determining the assessed value of property for ad valorem taxation;

(3) the term “rail transportation property” means property, as defined by the Board, owned or used by a rail carrier providing transportation subject to the jurisdiction of the Board under this part; and

(4) the term “commercial and industrial property” means property, other than transportation property and land used primarily for agricultural purposes or timber growing, devoted to a commercial or industrial use and subject to a property tax levy.

(b) The following acts unreasonably burden and discriminate against interstate commerce, and a State, subdivision of a State, or authority acting for a State or subdivision of a State may not do any of them:

(1) Assess rail transportation property at a value that has a higher ratio to the true market value of the rail transportation property than the ratio that the assessed value of other commercial and industrial property in the same assessment jurisdiction has to the true market value of the other commercial and industrial property.

(2) Levy or collect a tax on an assessment that may not be made under paragraph (1) of this subsection.

(3) Levy or collect an ad valorem property tax on rail transportation property at a tax rate that exceeds the tax rate applicable to commercial and industrial property in the same assessment jurisdiction.

(4) Impose another tax that discriminates against a rail carrier providing transportation subject to the jurisdiction of the Board under this part.

(c) Notwithstanding section 1341 of title 28 and without regard to the amount in controversy or citizenship of the parties, a district court of the United States has jurisdiction, concurrent with other jurisdiction of courts of the United States and the States, to prevent a violation of subsection (b) of this section. Relief may be granted under this subsection only if the ratio of assessed value to true market value of rail transportation property exceeds by at least 5 percent the ratio of assessed value to true market value of other commercial and industrial property in the same assessment jurisdiction. The burden of proof in determining assessed value and true market value is governed by State law. If the ratio of the assessed value of other commercial and industrial property in the assessment jurisdiction to the true market value of all other commercial and industrial property cannot be determined to the satisfaction of the district court through the random-sampling method known as a sales assessment ratio study (to be carried out under statistical principles applicable to such a study), the court shall find, as a violation of this section—