



September 9, 2022

The Honorable Peter DeFazio
Chairman
Committee on Transportation & Infrastructure
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Sam Graves
Ranking Member
Committee on Transportation & Infrastructure
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Maria Cantwell
Chair
Committee on Commerce, Science &
Transportation
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Roger Wicker
Ranking Member
Committee on Commerce, Science &
Transportation
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Via Electronic Mail

RE: Railroad Labor Negotiations

Dear Chairman DeFazio, Ranking Member Graves, Chair Cantwell, and Ranking Member Wicker:

On behalf of the American Chemistry Council (ACC), I am writing to urge Congress to closely monitor the ongoing contract negotiations for freight rail workers and, if necessary, act quickly to prevent a potentially devastating work disruption.

ACC represents more than 190 of America's leading chemical companies. Our members manufacture a wide variety of chemicals, polymers, and related products that make our lives and our world healthier, safer, more sustainable, and more productive. The business of chemistry supports over 25% of the U.S. GDP and directly touches nearly all manufactured goods.

Freight rail is critical to ACC's members and chemical manufacturing. Our industry is one of the largest freight rail customers, shipping 2.2 million carloads in 2021. We rely on railroads to safely transport our products to customers around the United States and the world. A rail strike or work stoppage of any length would cause potentially devastating harm to our industry, the nation's supply chains, and the economy.

The Presidential Emergency Board (PEB), established by President Biden to help the parties settle their dispute, issued its report and recommendations on August 16. If contract negotiations are unsuccessful, a railway strike or lockout could happen as soon as Sept. 16. Even before that, railroads and rail shippers will be forced to implement contingency plans to prepare for potential service disruptions.

A fair and workable rail labor agreement is a critical step towards resolving the ongoing freight rail service crisis that is already harming American manufacturers, farmers, and energy producers. ACC believes a negotiated solution between the parties is always the preferred outcome. However, if this fails, Congress must act quickly to prevent further damage to the economy. Past congressional measures have included additional cooling-off periods to continue negotiations, implementation of PEB recommendations, and compulsory arbitration.

Thank you for your engagement and responsiveness on this important issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'C. Jahn', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Chris Jahn
President and CEO

cc: Speaker Pelosi
Majority Leader Schumer
Leader McConnell
Leader McCarthy