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RANKING MEMBER OF THE
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April 26, 2022

Martin J. Oberman
Chairman
Surface Transportation Board
395 E Street, SW
Washington DC 20423

Dear Chairman Oberman:

I want to thank you and the other members of the Surface Transportation Board for holding hearings this week on the critical freight rail service problems facing U.S. agriculture producers today.

Producers are essential to ensuring the United States is able to maintain an economic edge and continue to feed and clothe the world, and historically, freight rail carriers played an integral role in this process, ensuring products are moved reliably and efficiently. For districts like mine, the two industries go hand-in-hand as the bedrock of the economy. However, for years, I've heard complaints from agriculture producers that the service of Class 1 carriers is increasingly unreliable, and rail congestion, labor shortages, marginal equipment, and the lack of box and hopper cars are leaving some farmers forced to look for alternatives.

It is in the best interest of producers and rail carriers alike that products move. In my district, there have been some examples in my district of Class 1s working with local groups to find solutions, and I encourage stakeholders across the country to do the same. In the midst of a global supply chain crisis, it is imperative that we avoid an inland supply chain crisis.

I urge the Board to listen to the challenges facing producers and work toward better freight rail service moving forward.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Rick Crawford", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Rick Crawford
MEMBER OF CONGRESS