

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

COMMITTEES:
APPROPRIATIONS
COMMERCE
HEALTH, EDUCATION,
LABOR, AND PENSIONS

November 26, 2024

The Honorable Joseph R. Biden, Jr.
President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, D.C. 20500

The Honorable Pete Buttigieg
Secretary of Transportation
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue SE
Washington, D.C. 20590

The Honorable Shalanda Young
Director
Office of Management and Budget
725 17th Street NW
Washington, D.C. 20503

Re: Federal Railroad Administration's Final Rule on Freight Car Safety Standards

Dear President Biden, Secretary Buttigieg, and Director Young,

I am writing to urge you to finalize a proposed rule to amend Freight Car Safety Standards under the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (49 U.S.C. § 20171) before the end of the year. This rule is critical to ensuring the safety and security of the U.S. freight rail system and supporting the resilience of our domestic manufacturing base.

In line with my SAFE TRAINS Act, signed into law as part of the bipartisan infrastructure law, this rulemaking addresses significant national security concerns by limiting the inclusion of certain foreign-sourced components in freight railcars and prohibiting sensitive technologies that could pose risks to the rail system. These measures are vital given the documented efforts by foreign state-owned enterprises to undercut domestic manufacturers through anti-competitive practices, threatening both economic stability and infrastructure security. The Federal Railroad Administration's (FRA) thoughtful approach strikes a necessary balance, enhancing safeguards against foreign interference while minimizing compliance burdens on industry.

It is imperative that the Department of Transportation and Office of Management and Budget (OMB) prioritize the completion of this rule to maintain the safety and competitiveness of the U.S. freight rail network. Delaying action could leave our domestic industry vulnerable and undermine critical national security protections. My understanding is the FRA had robust input

from stakeholders during their process and have finalized the rule, now awaiting a sign off from OMB.

Thank you for your attention to this critical matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Tammy Baldwin". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Tammy Baldwin
United States Senator