



August 6, 2024

Dear Member of Congress,

Reflecting on four years of achievements in his farewell address, President Trump suggested that deregulation might have been the most significant accomplishment of all. Under his administration, the United States government eliminated more than two old regulations for every new regulation adopted. The results were unmistakable: a stronger economy that delivered results for the American people.

Perhaps nowhere has this been so clear as for privately-owned freight railroads. For four years, the Trump administration repealed unneeded regulations, rejecting special interest calls to impose policies unrelated to the core focus of the U.S. Department of Transportation: advancing safety. Policymaking was based on sound data, and it showed: train derailments were down on average compared to the Obama administration.

Unfortunately, today, some Republicans are falling prey to the idea that government regulators can deliver better results on rail than free markets and a pro-growth economy. History proves otherwise: railroads exist today in large part due to deregulatory efforts that took place nearly half a century ago.

Proposed legislation like the Railway Safety Act in the Senate and the Railroad Safety Enhancement Act in the House ignores these hard lessons of the past. Purporting to respond to the 2023 derailment in East Palestine, Ohio, many of these bills' provisions (e.g. two-man crew mandates) look more like regulatory opportunism, with no grounding in the facts—not even according to the safety report compiled by a Biden-appointed National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB).

These bills fly in the face of the Trump legacy of eliminating unnecessary, burdensome, and costly regulations. Republicans must not turn their backs on the reality that American railroads are safer than ever before. Despite recent high-profile incidents, hazmat incidents are down 78% since 2000, and mainline accidents are down 44% thanks to private capital investment and technology upgrades empowered by the free market over the years.

We already have enough regulation and stagnation. We don't need more. We simply need to unleash America.

Thank you,

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