

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-1303

March 4, 2016

The Honorable Daniel R. Elliott III
Chairman
Surface Transportation Board
395 E St. SW
Washington, DC 20423

Dear Chairman Elliott:

Please accept this letter in regard to the February 12, 2016 filing by the Village of Evergreen Park, IL and the City of Chicago regarding the Elsdon Line owned and operated by CSX Transportation, CSX Transportation, Inc. – Acquisition of Operating Easement – Grand Trunk Western Railroad Company.

For some time now I have been concerned about the number of incidents of blocked crossings and equipment failures preventing passage across portions of CSX's Elsdon Line. On numerous occasions I have heard from residents and met with local and state officials concerning the difficulties caused by these incidents. I fully understand their frustrations. Not only do these challenges affect people's quality of life and day-to-day mobility, extended blocked crossings undermine public safety and emergency response when they impede police, fire, and ambulance vehicles and personnel from their necessary passage. In this situation it is especially critical because of the nearby location of two hospitals.

I have met with CSX leaders on these matters and have sought to bring local elected officials and CSX representatives together to seek solutions and to better communicate about the challenges involved at these crossings. CSX has indicated that they have increasingly devoted time and resources to addressing these challenges, and that they have made a concerted effort to fix broken equipment, install monitoring devices, respond to incidents, and to manage their trains to minimize blocked crossings. These actions and their comprehensive approach in recent months to identifying and finding solutions to the problems suggests that they are making efforts to reduce impacts to the local community. But I have been told by local officials that an unacceptable number of incidents are still occurring, as reflected in the filing to the Board.

As the Surface Transportation Board assesses the filing made by the Village of Evergreen Park and the City of Chicago, I urge it to give the concerns outlined in the filing full and fair consideration. It would be valuable for the STB to hear from all involved parties, outline clearly what performance CSX should be achieving with regard to the Elsdon Line, and determine whether CSX is achieving this performance. The need for further actions by the Board to ensure that CSX is fulfilling its obligations to the community should be determined by the Board's careful analysis of all the evidence that is presented. Given the current situation, it seems

appropriate that the Board at least extend the reporting requirement for CSX which is currently scheduled to end on June 30, 2016.

Thank you for your consideration of my views on this matter. I would appreciate it if you could keep my office apprised of the STB's future steps in regards to this filing.

Sincerely,



DAN LIPINSKI
Member of Congress

Cc: The Honorable Matt O'Shea
Alderman, 19th Ward

The Honorable Kelly Burke
State Representative, Illinois General Assembly

The Honorable Bill Cunningham
State Senator, Illinois State Senate

The Honorable James Sexton
Mayor, Village of Evergreen Park