



WISCONSIN STATE
FIRE CHIEFS ASSOCIATION
Together We Make A Difference

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United States Surface Transportation Board
395 East Street, NW
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RE: FD 36500 – Canadian Pacific/Kansas City Southern Railway Merger

On behalf of the Wisconsin State Fire Chiefs Association, we are committed to our mission of supporting all service leaders and enhancing the communities we serve. The proposed Canadian Pacific-Kansas City Southern railway merger appears contrary to our mission for a safer Wisconsin. We urge the Surface Transportation Board to take more time to look into every single community that will be affected, in order to mitigate any outcomes that will endanger public health and community safety.

Too many fire departments across the state are struggling with personnel and budgetary decreases, while calls for services continue to rise. We are under a great deal of pressure, and cannot afford to have any additional strains on our departments.

Further, several fire departments and emergency service stations throughout the state reside near railroads, or require crossing tracks to access emergencies. With this merger inevitably resulting in increased train length and traffic, it could create a nightmare scenario where emergency responders are unable to access or depart the station or cross the tracks to assist those needing emergency response. Both full-time and volunteer departments need every single second when responding to either fire or EMS related calls.

We understand that freight and passenger trains are essential to our economy and necessary for many industries. Unfortunately, rail transport also brings concerning consequences. Even putting those aside, the harm that could come from disregarding public safety is severe. Longer response times are unacceptable. Not being able to serve our community members is unacceptable. We need to acknowledge increased rail traffic frequency and length resulting from this potential merger while ensuring it does not adversely affect emergency response.

Please consider looking deeper into at-grade crossings and impacts to emergency response times. Fire departments along these lines need more data so they can be better prepared to serve their communities if this merger is approved. We will remain committed to keeping our communities safe, but would appreciate your help.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Michael Stanley

Michael Stanley
President, WSFCA