

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-4322

September 29, 2025

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Patrick J. Fuchs
Chairman
Surface Transportation Board
395 E Street, S.W.
Washington, D.C., 20423

Subject: Union Pacific's Rail Line Expansion in Matagorda County, TX – FD 36854

Dear Chairman Fuchs,

As the proud Representative of the Texas' 22nd Congressional District and senior member of the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure's Subcommittee on Railroads, Pipelines, and Hazardous Materials, I urge the Surface Transportation Board (STB) to swiftly consider and approve Union Pacific's (UP) proposed project in Matagorda County, TX.

Given it was one of the earliest areas settled in Texas, Matagorda County has played a foundational role in shaping the state's history and development. Today, the county boasts a gross domestic product of nearly \$2 billion.¹ My neighbors lead the way in energy, manufacturing, and agriculture – industries all reliant upon a reliable rail network. UP's proposed project will ensure businesses within the region, and along the Texas coast, continue to benefit from a safe, efficient, and competitive rail network, expanding access to domestic and international markets for Matagorda County's products.

Access to rail providers is essential for supporting businesses' growth and strengthening the communities they serve. The Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT), as part of their 2024 Texas Rail Plan, noted that "strong economic growth, especially international trade, is also expected to continue, and Texas will continue to outpace national growth rates."² Providing communities like Matagorda with dependable freight logistics is critical to ensuring that Texas—and the United States—fulfills President Trump's goal of restoring the nation as a global manufacturing superpower.

One of my top priorities in Congress has been to improve the safety of the rail network. Last Congress, I authored the *Railroad Safety Enhancement Act of 2024*, which would have provided funding to the railroad crossing elimination grant program. As I stated then, "removing as many rail crossings as possible will help reduce deaths and relieve congestion in the rail network." With that, I am glad to hear that this project would divert rail traffic that is currently going

¹ Bay City Chamber of Commerce and Agriculture, "[Industry Snapshot Matagorda County](#)", September 29, 2025.

² Texas Department of Transportation, "[2024 Texas Rail Plan](#)", February 2025.

through the town of Wadsworth, which will reduce the time residents have to wait at crossings and make the community safer.

This project is critical to the 22nd district, and I appreciate the partnership of the numerous entities who have brought it to fruition. I strongly encourage the STB to swiftly review, consider, and approve the project. Please do not hesitate to contact my office should you require any additional information or assistance in advancing this effort.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "T. Nehls", written over a horizontal line.

Troy E. Nehls
Member of Congress