



Surface Transportation Board
Washington, D.C. 20423-0001

Docket No. EP 742

244408

September 22, 2017

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September 22, 2017
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The Honorable Sonny Perdue
Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave., SW
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Secretary Perdue:

Thank you for your letter regarding the impact of CSX Transportation, Inc.'s (CSXT) recent operational changes on agriculture shippers. I appreciate knowing your views on this matter, and welcome your insight and recommendations.

The Surface Transportation Board (STB or Board) shares your concerns regarding CSXT's rail service problems and has taken several actions in response. In late July, the STB contacted CSXT President and CEO E. Hunter Harrison, requesting that CSXT begin weekly conference calls with Board staff to provide updates on critical operating issues impacting rail shippers. These issues include congestion at rail yards and gateways, interchange operations with other Class I railroads, availability of equipment and manpower, and service to customers with critical needs. Last month, the STB asked CSXT to provide specific data in advance of the weekly calls regarding certain key metrics, including train performance, car connection performance, hump and major yard performance, car availability, and gateway fluidity. Through the weekly calls and data, the Board is actively monitoring CSXT's service performance and recovery efforts.

Earlier this week, the Board announced that it has rescheduled its public listening session on CSXT's rail service problems and recovery efforts for Wednesday, October 11, 2017, which will be held here at our headquarters in Washington, DC. In addition to hearing from CSXT senior executives, the Board will also provide rail shippers and other stakeholders the opportunity to report on the impacts of CSXT's rail service issues and their experiences with CSXT in efforts to restore its service to acceptable levels. The public listening session was initially scheduled for September 11, 2017, but postponed due to Hurricane Irma. I assure you that CSXT's service to agriculture shippers will be discussed during the upcoming listening session.

Mr. Secretary, I greatly appreciate receiving USDA's additional information and recommendations regarding CSXT's service metrics. Your recommendations are under active consideration, and will also be raised at the upcoming listening session. In the meantime, please encourage agriculture shippers to bring service concerns to the Board's attention by contacting our Rail Customer and Public Assistance Office at 202-245-0238 or rcpa@stb.gov. Numerous

rail shippers have utilized this office to expedite resolution of urgent service issues and to help increase CSXT's awareness about particular service problems.

Again, thank you for contacting me to ensure the Board's awareness of how agriculture shippers are being impacted by CSXT's service issues. The Board will continue to work with CSXT and impacted rail shippers until acceptable service levels are restored, and may take additional steps as necessary. A copy of your letter has been added to the docket for the listening session: Public Listening Session Regarding CSX Transportation, Inc.'s Rail Service Issues, EP 742. If you have any further questions or concerns, please contact me at 202-245-0200 or Lucille Marvin, Director of the Office of Public Assistance, Governmental Affairs and Compliance at 202-245-0238.

Sincerely,



Ann D. Begeman
Acting Chairman