

AMERICA'S COAL ASSOCIATIONS

May 18, 2026

The Honorable John Thune
Majority Leader
United States Senate

The Honorable Mike Johnson
Speaker of the House
United States House of Representatives

The Honorable Charles Schumer
Democratic Leader
United States Senate

The Honorable Hakeem Jeffries
Democratic Leader
United States House of Representatives

The Honorable Ted Cruz
Chair, Senate Commerce Committee

The Honorable Sam Graves
Chairman, House Transportation and
Infrastructure Committee

The Honorable Maria Cantwell
Ranking Member, Senate Commerce
Committee

The Honorable Rick Larsen
Ranking Member, House Transportation
and Infrastructure Committee

Dear Leader Thune, Leader Schumer, Chairman Cruz, Ranking Member Cantwell, Speaker Johnson, Leader Jeffries, Chairman Graves, Ranking Member Larsen, and Members of Congress:

We write to express our continued concern regarding renewed consideration of transportation proposals that would impose broad, prescriptive changes on the nation's freight rail system. We appreciate Congress's continued focus on rail safety and urge lawmakers to ensure any action is carefully tailored, evidence-based, and mindful of the critical role freight rail plays in powering the American economy.

Freight rail is the backbone of America's supply chain, safely and efficiently moving the coal that powers our economy and underpins national energy security, as well as countless other goods essential to American families and businesses. Our industry depends on efficient, high-capacity, and reliable rail service to move large volumes to utilities, manufacturers, and export markets. Policies that reduce network flexibility, constrain capacity, or increase operating costs can have significant downstream consequences – including higher energy costs, supply disruptions, and added pressure on domestic producers and consumers alike.

It is our understanding that proposals under discussion could unintentionally undermine the reliability customers depend on. One-size-fits-all federal mandates related to train operations, staffing models, or other day-to-day operational decisions can reduce efficiency, create bottlenecks, and limit railroads' ability to adapt service to market conditions, geography, and customer needs. For bulk commodity shippers such as coal producers, dependable rail service is vital, and disruptions can carry serious economic consequences.

We applaud Congress's attention to railroad safety. As Congress evaluates next steps, particularly as it pursues a surface transportation bill by the September 30th deadline this year, policymaking should remain grounded in facts, data, and demonstrated risk. While service and reliability still have ample room for improvement, rail safety has advanced significantly over time through sustained private investment, continuous operational improvements, and the deployment of new technologies.

Considering this, we support evidence-based safety improvements that directly address documented risks and respectfully urge Congress to take a measured approach that protects both safety and the reliability of the nation's freight rail network. Consistent rail service is vital to coal providers, electric utilities, manufacturers, and communities across the country, and reforms should preserve that strength while promoting continued improvement.

On behalf of the undersigned organizations representing hundreds of thousands of American workers and a critical sector of the U.S. economy, we appreciate your

consideration and stand ready to work with Congress on policies that advance both safety and economic growth.

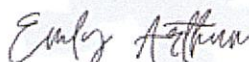
Sincerely,



Krissy Lilljedahl
Administrative Director
Texas Mining and Reclamation



Savannah Kerstiens
President
Reliable Energy



Emily Arthun
CEO
American Coal Council



Nick Williams
President
Illinois Coal Association



Rachel Gleason
Executive Director
Pennsylvania Coal Alliance



Sam McKown
President
Kentucky Coal Association



Travis Deti
Executive Director
Wyoming Mining Association



Chris Hamilton
President
West Virginia Coal Association



Chuck Laine
President
Tennessee Mining Association



Ed Spicer
Chairman
Ohio Coal Association

The American Coal Associations Group (ACA) is comprised of state mining Associations and Coal advocacy groups who collectively accounts for nearly a half billion domestic mining jobs and over \$300 billion dollars in annual economic activity. The ACA unites coal trade associations from across the country to advance policies that support coal's role as the backbone of America's energy grid and economy. ACA, comprised of the following state associations provides a unified platform for advocacy, education, and collaboration to strengthen coal communities and America's energy future.

CC:

The Honorable Sean Duffy, Secretary, U.S. Department of Transportation

The Honorable David Fink, Federal Railroad Administration Administrator

The Honorable Patrick Fuchs, Surface Transportation Board Chairman

The Honorable Kevin Hassett, White House National Economic Council Director

The Honorable Vince Haley, White House Domestic Policy Council Director