

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

December 6, 2013

The Honorable Bill Shuster
Chairman
Committee on Transportation and
Infrastructure
2165 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Nick J. Rahall, II
Ranking Member
Committee on Transportation and
Infrastructure
2163 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Jeff Denham
Chairman
Subcommittee on Railroads, Pipelines, and
Hazardous Materials
B-376 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Corrine Brown
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Railroads, Pipelines, and
Hazardous Materials
2111 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairmen Shuster and Denham and Ranking Members Rahall and Brown:

We write out of grave concern for public safety, given the deadly derailment on the Metro-North Railroad's Hudson Line on December 1st. This shocking incident is made all the more tragic by the fact that it was likely preventable. When combined with this year's other rail safety incidents, it creates the perception of an unacceptably dangerous status quo. We therefore request that the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, or the Subcommittee on Railroads, Pipelines, and Hazardous Materials, hold a hearing focused specifically on rail safety as soon as possible.

As you know, the Rail Safety Improvement Act of 2008 (Public Law 110-432, Division A) expired on October 1, 2013, leaving our nation's rail safety program in need of reauthorization. In light of recent accidents, it's important that we take time to evaluate the program and consider whether existing safety measures should be strengthened. This is a dire matter to our constituents. According to the Federal Railroad Administration, the following Metro-North accidents in our states of Connecticut and New York have caused 5 deaths and approximately 129 injuries this year alone:

- May 17th passenger train derailment and train-to-train collision in Bridgeport, CT;
- May 28th fatal roadway worker accident in West Haven, CT;
- July 18th CSX derailment at Spuyten Duyvil, Bronx, New York;
- December 1st derailment at Spuyten Duyvil, Bronx, New York.

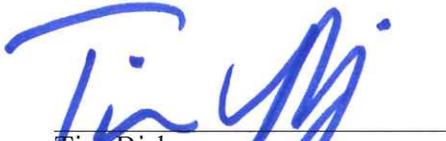
These concerns extend far beyond Metro-North or even passenger rail, as the deadly tank car explosion in Lac-Megantic, Quebec, made clear in July. Of the Subcommittee's seven hearings held this session, none have focused primarily on rail safety. Out of respect for rail employees

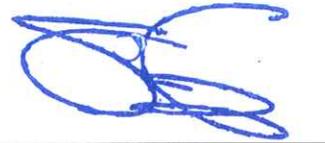
and passengers everywhere, especially those harmed last Sunday, we urgently request that the Committee or Subcommittee hold a hearing to investigate what steps can be taken to prevent such tragedies from happening again.

Sincerely,


Elizabeth H. Esty
Member of Congress


Jerrold Nadler
Member of Congress


Tim Bishop
Member of Congress


Sean Patrick Maloney
Member of Congress