

September 10, 2025

The Honorable Sam Graves
1135 Longworth House Office Bldg.
Washington, D. C. 20515

The Honorable Daniel Webster
2184 Rayburn House Office Bldg.
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The Honorable Rick Larsen
2163 Rayburn House Office Bldg.
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Dina Titus
2370 Rayburn House Office Bldg.
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chair Graves, Ranking Member Larsen, Chair Webster, and Ranking Member Titus:

As Congress pursues legislation investing in infrastructure, fostering continued economic development, and facilitating a more resilient transportation network, freight railroads are a key part of the solution. Every ton of freight moved by rail strengthens the economy, supports jobs, and saves taxpayers money.

Freight railroads invest private capital into maintaining and upgrading their infrastructure and technology across 135,000 track miles nationwide while other modes require taxpayer assistance. Freight railroads have spent more than \$830 billion on locomotives, freight cars, tracks, bridges, tunnels, and other equipment and technology since 1980. This equates to 39 cents of every dollar earned.

Private investment correlates directly with safety. The rail employee injury rate in 2023 was at an all-time low, and the train accident and hazmat accident rates are down 30% and 75%, respectively, since 2000.

Moreover, because a train can carry the load of several hundred trucks, railroads ease burdens on the nation's highways and bridges while also reducing congestion and emitting 75% fewer greenhouse gas emissions per ton-mile. As the greenest way to move freight over land, railroads account for approximately 40% of U.S. intercity freight while emitting less than 2% of transportation-related emissions.

In short, freight railroads are essential to the nation with freight demand expected to rise 50% by 2050. As such, the undersigned individuals and organizations believe any infrastructure package must enable continued, robust private-sector investment in freight rail.

When considering infrastructure legislation, Congress should include the following policies:

- **Prioritize Safety and Performance Through Innovation.** Congress should ensure any measure dealing with railroad operations addresses a specific need and is supported by sound data. New measures for future implementation by USDOT should be

performance-based and avoid prescriptive operational requirements. Outdated rules and practices limit innovation and competitiveness, standing in direct conflict with the stated goals of new leaders in Washington.

- **Improve Safety Partnership Opportunities.** Increasing funding for highway-rail grade crossing projects – including through the Section 130 program and the Grade Crossing Elimination program – and discretionary grant programs would enable the public sector to improve highway safety along railroad crossings. Other programs such as INFRA, MEGA, and CRISI, are also important for successful PPPs. Moneys aimed towards the freight rail sector should enable government to partner with freight railroads to advance projects of mutual interest. Congress should increase funding for these activities.
- **Restore the Highway Trust Fund and Modal Equity.** Railroads both compete with trucking companies over freight and count them among their biggest customers. Highway congestion and deficient infrastructure hurt the supply chain. Less efficient modes of transportation receive federal subsidies in the form of artificially low fuel taxes as well as incentives to automate their operations to improve network fluidity and safety. To ensure a robust and solvent Highway Trust Fund (HTF), Congress should base HTF funding on a “user pays” principle. When general fund monies are used to pay for roads and bridges, and when heavy trucks are allowed to operate without paying the full cost of their impact, highways are incentivized for freight movement. Over time, Congress should implement a system to ensure commercial vehicles pay their full infrastructure cost, including through a mileage structure that incorporates vehicle weight.
- **Reject Economic Re-Regulation.** Balanced economic regulation that favors market principles has allowed freight railroads to continue record investment in the rail network. Congress should avoid changes to the U.S. Surface Transportation Board as part of any infrastructure bill, particularly if it included measures that would threaten rail investment and undermine the ability of railroads to help the nation meet other policy goals.
- **Support Competitive Grant Programs.** Lawmakers should pursue funding for grant programs that enable the public sector, including state and local governments, to partner with freight and passenger railroads and other modes to improve the overall fluidity of the supply chain.

Thank you for your leadership and for your continued attention to the role freight railroads play in supporting robust and sustainable economies in communities across America.

Sincerely,

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Allen Mavrides
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Wisconsin Towns Association

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CC: Members of The United States House of Representatives

September 10, 2025

The Honorable Ted Cruz
167 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Maria Cantwell
511 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chair Cruz and Ranking Member Cantwell:

As Congress pursues legislation investing in infrastructure, fostering continued economic development, and facilitating a more resilient transportation network, freight railroads are a key part of the solution. Every ton of freight moved by rail strengthens the economy, supports jobs, and saves taxpayers money.

Freight railroads invest private capital into maintaining and upgrading their infrastructure and technology across 135,000 track miles nationwide while other modes require taxpayer assistance. Freight railroads have spent more than \$830 billion on locomotives, freight cars, tracks, bridges, tunnels, and other equipment and technology since 1980. This equates to 39 cents of every dollar earned.

Private investment correlates directly with safety. The rail employee injury rate in 2023 was at an all-time low, and the train accident and hazmat accident rates are down 30% and 75%, respectively, since 2000.

Moreover, because a train can carry the load of several hundred trucks, railroads ease burdens on the nation's highways and bridges while also reducing congestion and emitting 75% fewer greenhouse gas emissions per ton-mile. As the greenest way to move freight over land, railroads account for approximately 40% of U.S. intercity freight while emitting less than 2% of transportation-related emissions.

In short, freight railroads are essential to the nation with freight demand expected to rise 50% by 2050. As such, the undersigned individuals and organizations believe any infrastructure package must enable continued, robust private-sector investment in freight rail.

When considering infrastructure legislation, Congress should include the following policies:

- **Prioritize Safety and Performance Through Innovation.** Congress should ensure any measure dealing with railroad operations addresses a specific need and is supported by sound data. New measures for future implementation by USDOT should be performance-based and avoid prescriptive operational requirements. Outdated rules and practices limit innovation and competitiveness, standing in direct conflict with the stated goals of new leaders in Washington.

- **Improve Safety Partnership Opportunities.** Increasing funding for highway-rail grade crossing projects – including through the Section 130 program and the Grade Crossing Elimination program – and discretionary grant programs would enable the public sector to improve highway safety along railroad crossings. Other programs such as INFRA, MEGA, and CRISI, are also important for successful PPPs. Moneys aimed towards the freight rail sector should enable government to partner with freight railroads to advance projects of mutual interest. Congress should increase funding for these activities.
- **Restore the Highway Trust Fund and Modal Equity.** Railroads both compete with trucking companies over freight and count them among their biggest customers. Highway congestion and deficient infrastructure hurt the supply chain. Less efficient modes of transportation receive federal subsidies in the form of artificially low fuel taxes as well as incentives to automate their operations to improve network fluidity and safety. To ensure a robust and solvent Highway Trust Fund (HTF), Congress should base HTF funding on a “user pays” principle. When general fund monies are used to pay for roads and bridges, and when heavy trucks are allowed to operate without paying the full cost of their impact, highways are incentivized for freight movement. Over time, Congress should implement a system to ensure commercial vehicles pay their full infrastructure cost, including through a mileage structure that incorporates vehicle weight.
- **Reject Economic Re-Regulation.** Balanced economic regulation that favors market principles has allowed freight railroads to continue record investment in the rail network. Congress should avoid changes to the U.S. Surface Transportation Board as part of any infrastructure bill, particularly if it included measures that would threaten rail investment and undermine the ability of railroads to help the nation meet other policy goals.
- **Support Competitive Grant Programs.** Lawmakers should pursue funding for grant programs that enable the public sector, including state and local governments, to partner with freight and passenger railroads and other modes to improve the overall fluidity of the supply chain.

Thank you for your leadership and for your continued attention to the role freight railroads play in supporting robust and sustainable economies in communities across America.

Sincerely,

Alabama

Mack Butler
Representative
Alabama State Legislature

Kelvin Datcher
Representative
Alabama State Legislature

Joe Elliott
Commissioner
City of Wildwood

Gary Fuller
Mayor
City of Opelika

Ben Harrison
Representative
Alabama State Legislature

Stan Hogeland
Mayor
City of Gardendale

Arizona

Cesar Aguilar
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Keith Eaton
Mayor
Town of Florence

Jack Fitchett
Economic Development Director
City of Winslow

Patrice Horstman
Supervisor & Chair
Coconino County Board of Supervisors

Lauren Kuby
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Jorge Maldonado
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Independence County

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Senator
Arkansas State Senate

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West Memphis Chamber of Commerce

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Mayor
City of Blytheville

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Pope County

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Calhoun County

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Helena Harbor & Phillips Cty Economic Dev.

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Crawford County

Jordan Sowers
Justice of the Peace
Pope County

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Arkansas House of Representatives

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Yuba County

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Orange Cty Hispanic Chamber of Commerce

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City of Bakersfield

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Council Member
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City of San Jose

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Pacific Merchant Shipping Association

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City of Madera

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Front Range Passenger Rail District

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Senator
Delaware General Assembly

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Georgia General Assembly

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Deanna Gordon
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Maine State Legislature

Gary Friedmann
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Maine State Legislature

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Maine State Legislature

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Maine State Legislature

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Town of Concord

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Michigan House of Representatives

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Representative
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Representative
Missouri House of Representatives

Dave Hinman
Representative
Missouri House of Representatives

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New Hampshire House of Representatives

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City of Truth or Consequences

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City of Anthony

Fernando Herrera
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City of Anthony

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The Business Council of New York State, Inc.

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New Mexico State Senate

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Town of Greenburgh

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Senior VP of Research
John Locke Foundation

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Mayor
City of Cherryville

Katie Kenlan
Commissioner
Chatham County

Arthur Bullock
Commissioner
Bladen County

Faline Locklear
Commissioner
Robeson County

Sarah Conner
Commissioner
Town of Ayden

Seth Lumpkins
Commissioner
City of Oxford

Sean Ewing
Council Member
City of Mebane

Terry Mann
Mayor
City of Whiteville

Timothy Forrest
Council Member
City of Holly Springs

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Commissioner
Harnett County

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Council Member
City of Winston-Salem

Donald Matthews
Mayor
Siler City

Jason Hayes
Mayor
City of Lexington

Curtis McRae
Commissioner
City of Oxford

Keith Moore
Commissioner
Carteret County

Tyler Thomas
Town Manager
Town of Pembroke

Mac Morrow
Council Member
City of Brevard

John Tovey
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City of Oxford

Merilyn Newell
Mayor
City of Roxboro

Harold Weinbrecht
Mayor
Town of Cary

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Commissioner
Robeson County

Gray Wilson
Commissioner
Forsyth County

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North Carolina General Assembly

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Commissioner
Granville County

North Dakota

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Representative
North Dakota House of Representatives

Austen Schauer
Representative
North Dakota House of Representatives

Tim Mathern
Senator
North Dakota State Senate

Miranda Schuler
Commissioner
Ward County

Ohio

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Council Member
City of Painesville

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Council Member
City of Bedford

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President Pro Tem
City of Kent

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Mayor
City of Bowling Green

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Ohio State Legislature

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Council Member
City of Mason

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City of Hilliard

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City of Gahanna

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Portsmouth Area Chamber of Commerce

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Denise Driehaus
Commissioner
Hamilton County

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Commissioner
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Council Member
City of Circleville

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City Council Member At Large
City of London

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Economic Development Director
Ross Chillicothe Development

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Mayor
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Trustee
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Commissioner
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City of Rocky River

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Commissioner
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Mayor
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City of Sylvania

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City of Medina

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Mayor
Village of Waverly

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Ohio Legislature

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Commissioner
Paulding County

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City of Munroe Falls

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Mayor
City of Germantown

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Deputy Mayor
City of Centerville

Dan Lee
Mayor
City of Wapakoneta

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Council President
City of Belpre

Norman Martin
Council Member
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Mayor
City of Munroe Falls

Allen Mavrides
Mayor
City of Munroe Falls

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Trustee
Etna Township

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Mayor
City of Fostoria

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Mayor
City of Macedonia

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City of Bowling Green

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City of Troy

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Council Member
City of Maumee

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Ohio State Legislature

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Mayor
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City Engineer
City of Marion

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Council Member
City of Strongsville

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City of Lima

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Council Member
City of Marion

Kent Smith
Senator
Ohio State Legislature

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Oklahoma House of Representatives

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Tulsa Chamber of Commerce

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City of Oklahoma City

Margo Sommerville
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City of Akron

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Service-Safety Director
City of Bucyrus

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Administrator
Batavia Township

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City of Bucyrus

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Council Member
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Council Member
City of Parma

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Senator
Oklahoma State

Derek Sparks
Director of Government Relations
Oklahoma City Chamber of Commerce

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Oregon State Legislature

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Commissioner
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City of Tigard

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Oregon State Legislature

Lew Frederick
Senator
Oregon State Legislature

Deb Patterson
Senator
Oregon State Legislature

Mark Gamba
Representative
Oregon State Legislature

Khanh Pham
Senator
Oregon State Legislature

Chris Gorsek
Senator
Oregon State Legislature

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Lower North Philadelphia Comm. Dev. Corp.

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Representative
Pennsylvania House of Representatives

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West Brownsville Borough

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Town of McCandless

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Lancaster Chamber of Commerce

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Pennsylvania State Senate

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West Brownsville Borough

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South Carolina Legislature

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Council Member
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Council Member
City of Chester

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City of Aiken

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South Dakota State Senate

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Tennessee General Assembly

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Caldwell County

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Temple Economic Development Corporation

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Longview Area Chamber of Commerce

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Hondo EDC

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Abilene Chamber of Commerce

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County Judge
Presidio County

Teddy Reel
Mayor
City of Commerce

Utah

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Bay Area Houston Transportation
Partnership (BayTran)

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Denison Area Chamber of Commerce

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City of Greenville

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Hillsboro Economic Development
Corporation

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President & CEO
North Texas Commission

Ben White
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Taylor Economic Development Corporation

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Mansfield Area Chamber of Commerce

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City of Farmington

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Hurricane City

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City of West Bountiful

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Representative
Utah State Legislature

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City Council
Vineyard City

Gay Lynn Bennion
Representative
Utah State Legislature

Vermont

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Representative
Vermont House of Representatives

James Jim Masland
Representative
Vermont House of Representatives

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City of St. Albans

Kate McCann
Representative
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City of Riverton

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City of Syracuse

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City of Clearfield

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William Greer
Representative
Vermont House of Representatives

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Virginia General Assembly

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Virginia General Assembly

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City of Manassas

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City of Kennewick

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Washington State Legislature

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City of Arlington

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Chief of Police
City of Arlington Police Department

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Washington State Legislature

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City of Ocean Shores

West Virginia

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County Administrator
Wayne County Commission

Jeff Broadwater
City Administrator
City of Keyser

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Berkeley County Commission

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Delegate
West Virginia Legislature

Frederick "Rick" Hillenbrand
Delegate
West Virginia Legislature

Sean Hornbuckle
House Minority Leader
West Virginia Legislature

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Delegate
West Virginia Legislature

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Grants Department
Harrison County Commission

Travis Thompson
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Gaile Burchill
Supervisor
Sauk County

Sky Capriolo
Supervisor
Milwaukee County

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Susan Hendrickson
Supervisor
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Dana Johnson
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Outagamie County

Tara Johnson
Representative
Wisconsin State Assembly

Rob Kreibich
Representative
Wisconsin State Assembly

Thomas Lund
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Brown County

Jason Matthys
Administrative Coordinator
Pierce County

Matthew McGovern
Trustee
Village of Shorewood

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Howard Miller
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City of Hartford

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