

U.S. Sens. Baldwin, Cramer: Colleagues press Surface Transportation Board on rail disruptions, ease supply chain challenges

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WASHINGTON. D.C. – U.S. Senators Tammy Baldwin (D-WI) and Kevin Cramer (R-ND) led a bipartisan group of colleagues in a letter urging the Surface Transportation Board (STB) to ensure reliable, consistent rail service for American industries and shippers. Disruption of reliable rail services has prevented Made In Wisconsin products from the agriculture, manufacturing, and energy sectors to get to market on time, as shippers have no other alternative option to get their goods to sellers and consumers.

“We are very concerned over the significant rail service disruptions occurring throughout the U.S. freight rail network. Reports from rail customers, including our manufacturers, farmers, ranchers, and energy producers, indicate reliable rail service is not being provided in many situations,” **the 21 Senators said in the letter to the STB.** “In some instances, rail service problems have forced producers to curtail or temporarily stop production altogether. Further accounts of lengthy delays and unpredictable service paint a troubling picture of the conditions our nation’s commerce currently faces.”

“Given the impact of these rail service disruptions, STB’s oversight role is more critical now than ever. As railroads work to address existing challenges through

service restoration plans, we urge the STB to examine all constructive options towards ensuring reliable, consistent rail service is available to shippers across the U.S. rail network," **the Senators said.**

The letter also outlines concerns and issues raised by customers and labor organizations at last month's STB hearing on "Urgent Issues in Freight Rail Service" from agricultural producers and grain shippers unable to get empty railcars leading to significant delays in delivering commodities to energy producers forced to curtail production due to consistently delayed arrival of railcars.

Senators Baldwin and Cramer were joined by Senators Shelley Moore Capito (R-WV), Chuck Grassley (R-IA), Sherrod Brown (D-OH), Mike Rounds (R-SD), Patty Murray (D-WA), Joni Ernst (R-IA), Marco Rubio (R-FL), Tammy Duckworth (D-IL), Mike Crapo (R-ID), Jim Risch (R-ID), Tina Smith (D-MN), Mark Kelly (D-AZ), John Hoeven (R-ND), John Kennedy (R-LA), Joe Manchin (D-WV), Roger Marshall (R-KS), Amy Klobuchar (D-MN), Mike Braun (R-IN), and Dick Durbin (D-IL).

The letter is supported by the following groups: National Grain and Feed Association, National Mining Association, American Chemistry Council, and Growth Energy.

Senator Baldwin has long worked to address the challenges faced by businesses in Wisconsin and across the country when shipping by rail, including introducing [The Rail Shipper Fairness Act](#) to reduce costs and improve service problems faced by a broad coalition of Wisconsin rail shippers, including farmers, manufacturers and utilities.

The full letter is available [here](#).

An online version of this release is available [here](#).