



April 16, 2026

President Donald J. Trump  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW  
Washington, DC 20500

CC:

The Honorable Mike Johnson  
Speaker of the House  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable John Thune  
Senate Majority Leader  
United States Senate SD-511  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Mr. President,

America's energy sector is entering a period of renewed pressure. Rising electricity demand, geopolitical instability, expanding domestic manufacturing, and the rapid growth of energy-intensive technologies such as artificial intelligence and advanced computing are increasing the importance of reliable energy production and delivery across the United States.

Your Administration has emphasized strengthening American energy security, expanding domestic production, and revitalizing U.S. manufacturing. Achieving these goals will depend not only on continued investment in energy development—including oil and natural gas, electric power generation, mining, and refining—but also on the strength of the transportation networks that connect these resources to consumers and industries.

Energy production and freight transportation are deeply interconnected. Pipelines, railroads, ports, barges, and trucking networks form the backbone of the tangible economy, moving enormous daily volumes of crude oil, refined products, natural gas liquids, coal, chemicals, agricultural inputs, and critical minerals that power homes, factories, supply chains, and exports. Affordable and reliable energy is fundamental to economic growth, household budgets, manufacturing competitiveness, job creation, and national security.

Policymakers are rightly focused on strengthening domestic supply chains for critical minerals and materials essential to energy technologies and advanced manufacturing. These efforts require resilient logistics networks capable of moving large volumes safely and efficiently. These systems demand substantial long-term investment and operate in dynamic global markets. Stability and predictability in the regulatory environment are therefore essential. Yet regulatory actions that significantly increase the cost or complexity of moving energy commodities can reverberate throughout supply chains. This will raise energy prices, harm electricity reliability, undermine manufacturing competitiveness, and limit the availability of essential materials.

Rail transportation, in particular, plays a vital role in connecting energy producers, mines, manufacturers, and export terminals. Unfortunately, the proposed Railway Safety Act illustrates the

danger of imposing significant new operational mandates without clear evidence of improved safety outcomes.

The Act's two-person crew mandate, for example, ignores extensive data showing no connection between crew size and accident rates. Railroads safely reduced crews from three or more members through the 1990s as technology advanced, and overall accident rates improved. Federal reviews in 2016, 2019, and the Federal Railroad Administration's own 2024 rulemaking suggested there is no causal evidence justifying the mandate. European systems operate safely with one-person crews while maintaining lower fatality rates than in the United States. Codifying today's standard in statute would lock in current practices and block future technology-driven improvements.

The Act would also mandate fixed spacing for wayside hot-box detectors, roughly every 15 miles, rather than the current average of 25 miles, and rigid stop rules. This would cost the rail industry \$1.1 to 2.2 billion, nearly double the number of detectors, and raise installation, maintenance, and false-positive expenses. Bearing defects caused only 1.3% of derailments from 2020 to 2025. More importantly, the mandate would freeze today's technology and discourage the adoption of superior real-time on-board sensors and telematics that detect a broader range of failures earlier. Similar concerns apply to proposed speed limits for high-hazard trains, as most derailments occur in rail yards at about 5 mph and are driven by human factors, track defects, or equipment failures rather than excessive speed. Additionally, minimum inspection-time requirements that would turn safety into bureaucratic checklists rather than outcome-focused processes.

These provisions risk raising freight costs, slowing the movement of energy commodities, and discouraging the very innovation needed for safer, more efficient rail operations—directly undermining your goals of energy security, domestic manufacturing revival, and supply chain resilience.

As your Administration and Congress work to strengthen American energy leadership, we respectfully urge a disciplined, evidence-based approach to rail regulation. Avoiding unnecessary new burdens that lack empirical support will help ensure these shared national priorities remain achievable.

We appreciate your focus on American energy security and economic competitiveness and look forward to working constructively with your Administration and Congress on policies that promote reliability, innovation, and long-term growth.

Signatories:

Tom Pyle  
President  
American Energy Alliance

Alex Stevens  
Manager of Policy and Communications  
Institute for Energy Research

Melissa Simpson  
President  
Western Energy Alliance

Jerry R. Simmons  
President & CEO  
Domestic Energy Producers Alliance

Daniel C. Turner  
Founder & Executive Director  
Power the Future

Amy Cooke  
President  
Always On Energy Research

Grover Norquist  
President  
Americans for Tax Reform

Iain Murray  
Senior Fellow  
Competitive Enterprise Institute

Phil Kerpen  
President  
American Commitment

David Williams  
President  
Taxpayers Protection Alliance

Ryan Ellis  
President  
Center for a Free Economy

Jeffrey Mazzella  
President  
Center for Individual Freedom

James Taylor  
President  
The Heartland Institute

Nick Loris  
President  
C3 Solutions

Kristen Walker  
Senior Policy Analyst for Energy and  
Transportation  
American Consumer Institute

Daniel J. Mitchell  
President  
Center for Freedom and Prosperity

Paul Gessing  
President  
Rio Grande Foundation

Matthew Kandrach  
President  
Consumer Action for a Strong Economy

John Droz Jr.  
Founder  
Alliance for Wise Energy Decisions

Seton Motley  
Founder and President  
Less Government

Jon Sanders  
Director of the Center for Food, Power, and Life  
The John Locke Foundation

John Hinderaker  
President  
Center of the American Experiment

Yaël Ossowski  
Deputy Director  
Consumer Choice Center

Audrey Lane  
President  
Garden State Initiative