



DELAWARE GENERAL ASSEMBLY
STATE OF DELAWARE
LEGISLATIVE HALL
DOVER, DELAWARE 19901

March 27, 2015

The Honorable John C. Carney
Congressman, State of Delaware
1406 Longworth HOB
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressman Carney:

We write to you about an issue of serious concern for tens of thousands of Delawareans we represent directly and many more residents throughout the state. Every day, more than 100,000 barrels of Bakken crude oil are shipped by rail through Delaware, arriving at the PBF Refinery in Delaware City. Even more Bakken crude travels through Delaware in railcars bound for other refineries, such as those in the Philadelphia area and southern New Jersey.

We recognize the important role this crude oil plays in our local and regional economy, but we also see the steady flow of news about train derailments – with devastating results. As you know, the most significant of those was in July 2013, when a runaway oil train derailed and exploded in Lac-Megantic, Quebec. Forty-seven people were killed and 30 buildings destroyed. Earlier this month, a 105-car train derailed near Galena, Ill., with two cars bursting into flames. These disasters show us that the unthinkable could happen anywhere these trains travel, including Delaware.

It is for that reason that we ask you to advance federal legislation that will ensure the safety and stability of these oil railcars and the cargo they carry. Congress should enact regulations to ensure that this domestic product reaches local refineries safely so this industry can thrive.

We are aware of the federal RESPONSE Act, which is being co-sponsored by Pennsylvania Sen. Bob Casey. That proposal would create a new layer of bureaucracy and focus mainly on training and resources for first responders. While we certainly need to be cognizant of those needs, the paramount issue is preventing these derailments and explosions from occurring in the first place. We believe that legislation like the federal Crude-by-Rail Safety Act would move us in the right direction.

What is needed are reasonable regulations that ensure that the railroads and oil companies are supplying and transporting a safe, stable product, and our rail lines are capable of

safely delivering the cargo. Numerous proposals have been discussed in different circles, including more upgrades to railcars and train tracks, and potentially “de-gassing” the Bakken crude oil before shipping to reduce the product’s volatility.

Our request comes shortly after acting Federal Railroad Administrator Sarah Feinberg stated that oil companies should do more to ensure the safety of their shipments. We agree that all parties involved in this rapidly growing industry – from 9,500 railcars in 2008 to more than 400,000 last year – should be equal partners in ensuring the public safety before another tragedy occurs.

We stand ready to assist your office in any way possible. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions or need additional information from us.

Sincerely,

Ed Osienski
State Representative
24th District

David B. McBride
Senate Majority Leader
13th District

Patricia M. Blevins
President Pro Tempore
7th District

Pete Schwartzkopf
Speaker of the House
14th District

Valerie Longhurst
House Majority Leader
15th District

Margaret Rose Henry
Senate Majority Whip
2nd District

John J. Viola
House Majority Whip
26th District

Bethany A. Hall-Long
State Senator
10th District

Robert I. Marshall
State Senator
3rd District

Harris B. McDowell III
State Senator
1st District

Karen E. Peterson
State Senator
9th District

Nicole Poore
State Senator
12th District

David P. Sokola
State Senator
8th District

Bryan Townsend
State Senator
11th District

Michael A. Barbieri
State Representative
18th District

Paul S. Baumbach
State Representative
23rd District

Gerald L. Brady
State Representative
4th District

William J. Carson
State Representative
28th District

Earl G. Jaques Jr.
State Representative
27th District

James J. Johnson
State Representative
16th District

S. Quinton Johnson
State Representative
8th District

Helene M. Keeley
State Representative
3rd District

John A. Kowalko Jr.
State Representative
25th District

John L. Mitchell Jr.
State Representative
13th District

Michael P. Mulrooney
State Representative
17th District

W. Charles Paradee
State Representative
29th District

Charles Potter Jr.
State Representative
1st District

Michael Ramone
State Representative
21st District

Bryon H. Short
State Representative
7th District

Kimberly A. Williams
State Representative
19th District

CC: The Honorable Thomas R. Carper, Senator, State of Delaware
The Honorable Christopher A. Coons, Senator, State of Delaware