

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-4705

December 21, 2017

The Honorable Senator John Thune
Chairman
U.S. Senate Commerce, Science, and
Transportation Committee
512 Dirksen Senate Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Senator Bill Nelson
Ranking Member
U.S. Senate Commerce, Science, and
Transportation Committee
425 Hart Senate Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Thune and Ranking Member Nelson:

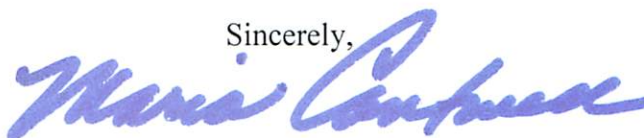
I am writing to request that the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation hold an oversight hearing on current Amtrak safety standards and training procedures, and the state of federal rail safety regulation as soon as possible when Congress returns in January. Following the recent derailment incident in DuPont, Washington, which claimed 3 lives and injured more than 70 people, the traveling public needs to know that Amtrak and its regulator, the Federal Railroad Administration, are doing all they can to protect the safety of passengers who use this vital piece of our transportation infrastructure.

In the last decade alone, train accidents in the United States have taken the lives of dozens of passengers. In 2008, a commuter train sped through a red signal and crashed headlong into a freight train in Chatsworth, California. In New York, a Metro North commuter train derailed in the Bronx in 2013, while another crashed along the Harlem line in February of 2015. Later in 2015, an Amtrak Northeast Regional train derailed in Philadelphia. These events took the lives of 46 people and injured more than 450. Heartbreaking events like these serve as all too frequent reminders that train safety must be a priority issue for our Committee.

Passenger and freight railways remain a critical part of the nation's transportation network. Millions of Americans depend on rail service each day, and businesses in every corner of our country depend on freight rail to keep commerce running. Therefore, the alarming rate of incidents on our rails is cause for tremendous concern. We should be doing everything in our power to address train safety issues as quickly as possible in order to prevent similar accidents in the future.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,



Maria Cantwell
United States Senator

EVERETT
2930 WETMORE AVENUE
SUITE 9B
EVERETT, WA 98201
(425) 303-0114
FAX: (425) 303-8351

RICHLAND
825 JADWIN AVENUE
SUITE 204/204A
RICHLAND, WA 99352
(509) 946-8106
FAX: (509) 946-6937

SEATTLE
JACKSON FEDERAL BUILDING
915 2ND AVENUE, SUITE 3206
SEATTLE, WA 98174-1003
(206) 220-6400
TOLL FREE: 1-888-648-7328
FAX: (206) 220-6404

SPOKANE
U.S. FEDERAL COURTHOUSE
WEST 920 RIVERSIDE, SUITE 697
SPOKANE, WA 99201
(509) 353-2507
FAX: (509) 353-2547

TACOMA
950 PACIFIC AVENUE
SUITE 615
TACOMA, WA 98402
(253) 572-2281
FAX: (253) 572-5879

VANCOUVER
MARSHALL HOUSE
1313 OFFICERS' ROW
FIRST FLOOR
VANCOUVER, WA 98661
(360) 696-7838
FAX: (360) 696-7844

WASHINGTON, DC
511 HART SENATE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-4705
(202) 224-3441
FAX: (202) 228-0514