



Surface Transportation Board  
Washington, D.C. 20423-0001

May 7, 2020

Mr. Jean-Jacques Ruest  
President and Chief Executive Officer  
Canadian National Railway Company  
935 de La Gauchetiere Street West, 16<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Montreal, Quebec H3B 2M9  
Canada

Dear Mr. Ruest:

*Jean-Jacques*

I am writing to recognize the responsiveness of the freight rail industry during this challenging time for our country. As a key component of the nation's transportation network, the freight rail industry, including its thousands of hard-working and dedicated employees, has buttressed critical supply chains that are vital to public health and welfare.

Since the onset of the COVID-19 national emergency, the Board has maintained frequent and regular communication with railroads, rail shippers, and other stakeholders, including our participation in conference calls hosted by the Federal Railroad Administration. Through these efforts, the Board has been able to monitor freight rail service, understand challenges posed by the pandemic, and facilitate information sharing about supply chain issues. Many rail shippers have shared their appreciation for the freight railroads' responsive and reliable service, and the Board commends the industry for its efforts.

As the nation cautiously transitions from COVID-19 containment into recovery, many rail-served industries, large and small, will begin to scale up toward full production. During this period, it is vital that the freight rail industry continues its robust communications with the Board, and, to this end, I am very interested in hearing from each Class I railroad on its preparedness to meet anticipated future demand. In that effort, I would appreciate information on the ready availability of train crew, yard, and maintenance employees (both new hires and return of furloughed workers) and equipment resources (including stored locomotives and rail cars). I am also interested in learning about measures to enhance communications with rail shippers and other stakeholders with respect to service performance and operating conditions. Additionally, I ask that the Class I carriers continue to report demurrage and accessorial charge revenue on a quarterly basis for 2020. Such reporting, which I initially requested through 2019, is important to the Board as it works to monitor the fluidity of the rail network.

Again, the Board commends the industry for its efforts during this challenging period in our nation's history, and I look forward to continuing frequent communication in the months ahead.

Sincerely,

*Ann Begeman*  
Ann Begeman  
Chairman