



July 6, 2022

The President
The White House
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

On behalf of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, I urge you to help resolve the ongoing labor negotiations between the Class I freight railroads and the twelve rail unions by following historic precedent and appointing a Presidential Emergency Board (PEB) comprised of individuals who are impartial, belong to the National Academy of Arbitrators, and have direct experience in resolving rail disputes. It is imperative that the Administration act to prevent any disruption to America's rail service.

The National Mediation Board's (NMB) decision to release the Class I freight railroads and the twelve rail unions from mediation presents a new challenge to the U.S. business community, which is already navigating a difficult environment. Unless the Administration acts, either party is free to exercise "self-help" options – including a strike – beginning on July 18, 2022.

The U.S. business community faces enormous challenges today from record inflation, labor shortages, and ongoing supply chain disruptions due to the COVID-19 pandemic. And we are now facing uncertainty over the possibility of further disruptions during preparations for the holiday shopping season. Any breakdown would be disastrous for U.S. consumers and the economy, and potentially return us to the historic supply chain challenges during the depths of the pandemic.

Following the precedent of previous PEBs as outlined above would demonstrate respect for the complexity of issues on both sides, communicate a commitment to reaching a reasonable agreement, and a lack of tolerance for any service disruptions.

We remain optimistic that both sides will be able to resolve their differences and voluntarily reach a new agreement. However, the Administration's next steps will be critical in this regard. Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Suzanne P. Clark". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end of the last name.

cc: The Honorable Marty Walsh, Secretary of Labor
The Honorable Pete Buttigieg, Secretary of Transportation