



Town of West Springfield

William C. Reichelt
Mayor

26 Central Street, Suite 23
West Springfield, MA 01089
(413) 263-3041 | Mayor@tows.org

30 March 2021

**Via Email: dpu.efiling@mass.gov
& jennifer.cargill@mass.gov**

Jennifer Cargill
Hearing Officer
Department of Public Utilities
1 South Station, 5th Floor
Boston, MA 02110

**Re: D.P.U. Docket No.: 21-31
Town of West Springfield Written Comments**

Dear Hearing Officer Cargill:

Please accept this letter as written comments submitted on behalf of the Town of West Springfield relative to the above-referenced investigation by the Department of Public Utilities ("Department") considering whether CSX Transportation Inc. ("CSX") is in violation of G.L. c. 160, § 151.

At the outset, on behalf of the residents of West Springfield, I would like to express my sincere appreciation that this matter is being formally investigated by the Department. During my tenure with the Town of West Springfield (and well before that), CSX's blockages of the Front/Bridge Street crossing in West Springfield have been a constant source of frustration and anxiety for members of the community. What was once (many years ago) an occasional interruption, has become a regular and extended occurrence within the past decade, causing disruption to public safety services and the lives of residents who use this crossing to travel between communities.

Within the past several years, CSX's blockages of this crossing have become more frequent than ever, often occurring daily and sometimes lasting upwards of an hour at a time. These blockages cause significant disruption to the lives of West Springfield's residents as well as to the operations of local businesses. In addition, the blockages jeopardize public safety, as they interfere with the mutual aid agreement between West Springfield and Agawam for fire and emergency medical services and cause significant delay in the event of a need for mutual aid from one community to the other.

By way of background, West Springfield is a city of approximately 28,000 residents, located in western Massachusetts. Known as the "Crossroads of New England," where the Mass Pike, Route 91 and Route 5 all intersect, West Springfield is a significant travel corridor of the area. West Springfield is approximately 17.5 square miles; its entire eastern border is the Connecticut River and its entire southern border is the Westfield River. Given that two of the city's borders are rivers, there are limited points of access on approximately half of its boundaries.

On the southern border, there are two main local points of access from Agawam, the Morgan-Sullivan Bridge, which is currently undergoing reconstruction by the Massachusetts

Department of Transportation (“MassDOT”) and the Vietnam Veterans Bridge, located just past the railroad crossing in question, on Bridge Street in West Springfield. The other point of access between the two communities is U.S. Route 5, a non-local highway.

CSX has an intermodal terminal and large rail yard located in West Springfield, just east of both bridges, with an address of 151 Day Street. When an active train stops in the West Springfield yard for any reason, it is almost guaranteed that the Front/Bridge Street crossing will be blocked and passage to Agawam via the Vietnam Veterans Bridge will be impossible. During the Morgan-Sullivan Bridge project, the lanes of traffic on that bridge have been significantly limited and, with that being the only other local point of access to Agawam, there are significant traffic backups whenever the Front/Bridge Street crossing is blocked.

During the planning stages of the MassDOT Morgan-Sullivan Bridge project, elected officials from both West Springfield and Agawam attempted on several occasions to reach out to CSX officials to resolve the issue of the blocked Front/Bridge Street crossing in advance of the Morgan-Sullivan Bridge project. With the Morgan-Sullivan Bridge’s traffic capacity being significantly limited by the project, we attempted to discern from CSX whether there was any way to resolve the blockage issue at the Front/Bridge Street crossing to ensure that residents were not having their day disrupted and that the operations of local businesses were not being impacted.

CSX was unwilling to participate in any measures to mitigate its negative impacts on the local community. CSX refused to provide scheduling information, asserted it was not possible to break the trains at the crossing and CSX representatives essentially indicated that the company was able to do what it wanted due to its status under federal law. It was extremely disappointing that CSX was not interested in engaging with us in an effort to be a good neighbor to those who live and work in the area surrounding its property in West Springfield.

While we attempted to continue the dialogue with CSX, MassDOT volunteered to provide us with a livestream camera at the Front/Bridge Street crossing that the public could access to view in real time to see if the crossing was blocked (this is the same camera by which a Department investigator viewed the violation that is at issue in the instant matter). It was only after MassDOT became involved that CSX finally engaged in discussions with representatives of West Springfield and Agawam. As part of these discussions, MassDOT agreed to provide advance warning signals (which CSX was unwilling to provide) and CSX reluctantly agreed to provide access to its systems to the signals to be installed in each community to notify motorists of the blocked crossing.

While the livestream camera and warning systems have alleviated some of the traffic disruption caused by CSX’s blockages, they are merely mitigation measures and not actual solutions to the issue. CSX has been unwilling to meaningfully participate in any type of discussion that involves any effort on its part whatsoever to resolve this issue. It is disappointing and disheartening that CSX so blatantly disregards the concerns of the community in which it does business. In addition to this major issue of the crossing blockage, CSX also refuses to maintain the land surrounding its yard free from rubbish. CSX has also been extremely difficult for our Department of Public Works to deal with in order to coordinate work on our sewer line, located within land owned by CSX, which we have a lawful easement to access to perform maintenance work. While not directly relevant to the issue at hand, it further demonstrates CSX’s unwillingness and refusal to engage with the community in which it conducts business.

It seems that the blockages have intensified in the past few years, following CSX's completion of a project in which it raised a bridge in West Springfield, to allow double stacked trains to pass under Route 20. The Route 20 bridge project, which was met with significant opposition from West Springfield, was completed in 2014 and the issues with blockages have become substantially more prevalent since that time. Although CSX denies a correlation between the project and the increased blockages, it is difficult to ignore the fact that the blockages increased following completion of that controversial project, in which CSX again largely ignored the input and feedback it received from West Springfield.

To supplement and substantiate the issues that local residents face regarding the blockages caused by CSX, we solicited written comments from the public. Enclosed are approximately 115 different written comments submitted by local residents, a majority of whom reside in West Springfield. You will see that the CSX blockage is an issue that affects many residents and local businesses and has intensified in the recent past. Many of the comments echo what has been laid out in this letter; namely that the blockages are frequent and significant and that they cause disruption to local businesses and the lives of residents.

Furthermore, I would be remiss if I did not reiterate that the blockages also are a serious cause for concern related to public safety. As mentioned earlier, West Springfield and Agawam have a mutual aid agreement for fire and emergency medical services and the blockages at this crossing cause delays in those services, which could be a matter of life and death.

On behalf of the residents of West Springfield and all of our local elected officials, I again want to thank you for investigating this very important matter. I am sure that you will take the matter very seriously and we would be happy to work cooperatively with the Department on any potential efforts to resolve this issue with CSX in a meaningful way.

We look forward to a fair and equitable resolution of this matter. If we can provide any additional information, please do not hesitate to contact my office.

Sincerely,



William C. Reichelt
Mayor

Enclosures

cc: Agawam Mayor William Sapelli
West Springfield Town Council
Kate O'Brien Scott, Town Attorney
Maurice O'Connell, Esq., CSX Transportation, Inc.

Written Comments – CSX Blocking Front/Bridge Street Crossing

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Your Name (First and Last) *

Walter Nutter

Where do you currently reside? *

☐ Agawam

☐ West Springfield

☒ Other: Oakham

Please submit any written comments that are relative to the Department of Public Utilities' investigation of CSX's blocking of the Front/Bridget Street crossing. *

I’m a retired 43 year veteran RR Engineer. I did not work for CSX, not am I familiar with the crossing at issue here. But I am familiar with issues involved in blocked crossings. There is a reasonable solution to this. It’s known to railroads as “cutting the crossing,” a very common practice for freight railroads. CSX surely knows when they’re about to “foul” the crossing for an extended period. They simply need to send a qualified worker to the crossing, separate the train cars at one side of the crossing and then pull the part blocking the crossing into the clear. If it’s single track, the crossing protection (gates and flashers) can be disabled by that same employee. Once the train is ready to go, the train can be reassembled, brakes tested and be on its way. This is not rocket science, it’s CSX being a bully and not wanting to be inconvenienced.

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Your Name (First and Last) *

Philip Roberts

Where do you currently reside? *

☐ Agawam

☒ West Springfield

☐ Other: _____

Please submit any written comments that are relative to the Department of Public Utilities' investigation of CSX's blocking of the Front/Bridget Street crossing. *

The train has been blocking the crossing of that bridge for at least 15 years. When I first got my license I would routinely get stuck on the bridge going to and from my friends house. It would turn a 5 minute drive into a 15. That was nothing more than a mild inconvenience. As a manager of an expanding restaurant though, it is a major issue. We routinely get requests to deliver from The Crest Room to Agawam, but know that if we do we will be contending with the train on a regular basis and causing delays to our customers. I'm not sure how CSX has gotten away with this for so long, but I'm glad the mayors and council people from both towns are getting things in motion.

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Your Name (First and Last) *

Christine Foley

Where do you currently reside? *

☐ Agawam

☒ West Springfield

☐ Other: _____

Please submit any written comments that are relative to the Department of Public Utilities' investigation of CSX's blocking of the Front/Bridget Street crossing. *

I'm a fourth generation resident in West Springfield and I've lived here for 46 years. In those 46 years there's always been trained traffic and the occasional blocking of the road crossing from West Springfield into Agawam however and the last decade or so it has gotten substantially worse, the occurrences are several times a week, I typically wait however on several occasions I have left due to it exceeding 30 minutes and once I waited 52 minutes. the trans obviously pull forward into the yard and then begin shunting cars but leave the end of the train sitting and blocking the intersection, they also pull forward and will sit there for 10 to 15 minutes and then start to back up which will take another 5 minutes and then pull forward again. I also resided on plateau circle from 2011 to 2013 my home was across the street from the hill which runs down to the railroad tracks and River area maybe a few hundred feet from the crossing. the hill and property above the railroad tracks is supposed to be maintained by CSX. However they do not maintain the area, it's overgrown and full of trash that has been dumped. There used to be a fence to prevent dumping and the hill was maintained somewhat but they tore down the fence and haven't touched that area in well over a decade.our neighborhood organized a cleanup and came with trailers and cleaned up couches, mattresses, furniture, broken glass from parties that occur down on the railroad tracks. When I was younger the area in back of mittinegue Park and the hills in back of the residential areas seem to be taken care of much better than they are now.

I'd like to see CSX taste some pride in the towns and communities that their railroad travels through and show respect for those residents by sharing the roadways.

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Your Name (First and Last) *

Anthony Germano

Where do you currently reside? *

☐ Agawam

☒ West Springfield

☐ Other:

Please submit any written comments that are relative to the Department of Public Utilities' investigation of CSX's blocking of the Front/Bridget Street crossing. *

The stopping at this railroad crossing is been getting much worse this past year. serveral times already this year, the train is either breaking/slowing down or has completed stopped.

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Your Name (First and Last) *

Cheryl Coratti

Where do you currently reside? *

☒ Agawam

☐ West Springfield

☐ Other: _____

Please submit any written comments that are relative to the Department of Public Utilities' investigation of CSX's blocking of the Front/Bridget Street crossing. *

Im a lunch delivery driver. I generally stay on Agawam, but sometimes as much as 3 times a week I deliver to West Springfield during lunch hours. There is a elementary school right up the hill that I sometimes have to go all the way around to the bridge by Rockys and deal with them new bridge construction over there...when the lights are blinking because the train just sits there. And by the time I get over to the underpass the other direction....the train is still not moving. Its frustrating to not be able to deliver in a timely manner..which looks bad for the company and myself and losing tips because of this. Not to mention the warning lights aren't always in sync. The train lights are great as I can reroute...but the other direction just takes so much longer.

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Your Name (First and Last) *

Stephen Strauss

Where do you currently reside? *

☐ Agawam

☒ West Springfield

☐ Other: _____

Please submit any written comments that are relative to the Department of Public Utilities' investigation of CSX's blocking of the Front/Bridget Street crossing. *

I've been stopped upwards of an hour and a half due to the trains blocking the road on multiple occasions. It seems summer time is significantly worse than the rest of the year. CSX seems to abuse the kindness of our town and acts if they are untouchable. The complete disregard for local citizens is an out rage. They even have a member of their company sit by the tracks as of they are law enforcement.

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Your Name (First and Last) *

Hannah Calderone

Where do you currently reside? *

☒ Agawam

☐ West Springfield

☐ Other: _____

Please submit any written comments that are relative to the Department of Public Utilities' investigation of CSX's blocking of the Front/Bridget Street crossing. *

Multiple times a week on my morning & afternoon commute I get stuck at this crossing where the train sits so long that it is still sitting there by the time I make the 10+ minute alternate route home.

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Your Name (First and Last) *

Mary Sicard

Where do you currently reside? *

☐ Agawam

☐ West Springfield

☒ Other: Southampton

Please submit any written comments that are relative to the Department of Public Utilities' investigation of CSX's blocking of the Front/Bridget Street crossing. *

I have gotten stuck waiting for the train to move many times over the last 3 years, my daughter lives on Ottawa St. and it's a waste of time and gas to have to go all the way around when I'm going literally seconds away from the track. It's the shortest distance between my house and hers. There are times that I've needed to get there asap to either babysit my granddaughter on snow or sick days, or pick her up from school, which was 1 minute away from the house. (She's at a different school this year.) When you have to go around the traffic both other ways gets backed up and can take 4 or 5 times as long. Again, I'm going seconds away from the track.

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Your Name (First and Last) *

Mckinley M

Where do you currently reside? *

☒ Agawam

☐ West Springfield

☐ Other: _____

Please submit any written comments that are relative to the Department of Public Utilities' investigation of CSX's blocking of the Front/Bridget Street crossing. *

I live right by the front street crossing and the blockage of the crossing is awful! There is no way to predict it and the wait ranges upwards of over an hour. The alternative route is long and for those who live right over the bridge, it is very inconvenient. In cases of emergency it may also prolong mutual aid with the need to go longer routes. The warning lights that were installed a few years ago barely help as they tell you that there's a rain there and that's it. It would be easier if it was at least predictable if they won't stop parking for extended periods of time. A good question I believe is why are they parked for so long? What's the necessity to this?

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Your Name (First and Last) *

Jennifer Nadle

Where do you currently reside? *

☐ Agawam

☒ West Springfield

☐ Other: _____

Please submit any written comments that are relative to the Department of Public Utilities' investigation of CSX's blocking of the Front/Bridget Street crossing. *

I understand stopping for a moving train, however when the train is not moving & just at a standstill I find it frustrating & unacceptable.

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Your Name (First and Last) *

Kim Fortini

Where do you currently reside? *

☐ Agawam

☒ West Springfield

☐ Other: _____

Please submit any written comments that are relative to the Department of Public Utilities' investigation of CSX's blocking of the Front/Bridget Street crossing. *

There have been several occasions that we have had to wait on a train. The longest wait was aprox 45 minutes. It can be very frustrating.

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Your Name (First and Last) *

Paul Normand

Where do you currently reside? *

☐ Agawam

☒ West Springfield

☐ Other: _____

Please submit any written comments that are relative to the Department of Public Utilities' investigation of CSX's blocking of the Front/Bridget Street crossing. *

Totally Unacceptable

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Your Name (First and Last) *

Mike Dalke

Where do you currently reside? *

☐ Agawam

☒ West Springfield

☐ Other: _____

Please submit any written comments that are relative to the Department of Public Utilities' investigation of CSX's blocking of the Front/Bridget Street crossing. *

Just like many residents of this town and Agawam I find the delays caused by train sitting on the track for what I consider excessive amount of time something that's offensive and could possibly be a public safety hazard I no longer go that way because I feel that I am just gonna sit in traffic for no good reason yes something has to be done about it I don't know what the answer is but I suppose a DPW engineer and the railroad engineers could come up with a better solution maybe just a scheduling issue but it is offensive and I wish it would stop

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Your Name (First and Last) *

Rachel Gregory

Where do you currently reside? *

☐ Agawam

☒ West Springfield

☐ Other: _____

Please submit any written comments that are relative to the Department of Public Utilities' investigation of CSX's blocking of the Front/Bridget Street crossing. *

I find more often than not, that this train is blocking the road crossing west Springfield to Agawam. Often, the train is stopped. It is frustrating and inconvenient, but also dangerous for emergencies! My children and I often cross these tracks to access needs in Agawam. There is only one other option to get to Agawam because of the train constantly blocking this road.

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Your Name (First and Last) *

Gail Goodenow

Where do you currently reside? *

☐ Agawam

☒ West Springfield

☐ Other: _____

Please submit any written comments that are relative to the Department of Public Utilities' investigation of CSX's blocking of the Front/Bridget Street crossing. *

The blinking/warning lights warning motorists of a train on the tracks have not worked.

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Your Name (First and Last) *

Michelle Bonnayer

Where do you currently reside? *

☐ Agawam

☒ West Springfield

☐ Other: _____

Please submit any written comments that are relative to the Department of Public Utilities' investigation of CSX's blocking of the Front/Bridget Street crossing. *

As a West Springfield resident, I have a part time job in Agawam. I have been stopped on the tracks many times, having to turn around and go another way if I want to be at work on time. With other routes also having their own issues (bridge work, Big E), this is wildly inconvenient. On my way home from work, I once waited over 40 minutes before turning around. Without the train, I can commute to work in about 13 minutes. With a child at home, I am unable to leave super early to accommodate the train's inconsistent schedule. The lights have been helpful but don't always work.

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Your Name (First and Last) *

Carianne Leahy

Where do you currently reside? *

☐ Agawam

☒ West Springfield

☐ Other: _____

Please submit any written comments that are relative to the Department of Public Utilities' investigation of CSX's blocking of the Front/Bridget Street crossing. *

The amount of times i have been stuck for more then10mins at the railroad tracks has insane! I have been late for multiple appointments/ picking up my children or just completely inconvenienced! If they are doing the changing of the tracks i would recommend not peak traffic times! Or establish a more efficient process to ensure the wait times are less! I don't mind waiting for a MOVING train but one that just sits their is being selfish

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Your Name (First and Last) *

Grant Young

Where do you currently reside? *

☐ Agawam

☒ West Springfield

☐ Other: _____

Please submit any written comments that are relative to the Department of Public Utilities' investigation of CSX's blocking of the Front/Bridget Street crossing. *

I travel to Agawam daily for work from West Springfield. Csx routinely blocks the Front street crossing for long periods of time every week. This happens at all times of the day and is a major problem for the entire area

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Your Name (First and Last) *

Lisa Gray

Where do you currently reside? *

☐ Agawam

☒ West Springfield

☐ Other: _____

Please submit any written comments that are relative to the Department of Public Utilities' investigation of CSX's blocking of the Front/Bridget Street crossing. *

On Wednesday, March 17th 2021, I approached the Front/Bridge St. Crossing from the Agawam side. When I arrived, there were already 5 cars in line waiting and the train was stopped across both crossings. I arrived at about 11:30am. I waited until 11:50, or so, for the train to begin moving again and was finally able to cross over the tracks after about 5 minutes.

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Your Name (First and Last) *

Angela Tourville

Where do you currently reside? *

☐ Agawam

☒ West Springfield

☐ Other: _____

Please submit any written comments that are relative to the Department of Public Utilities' investigation of CSX's blocking of the Front/Bridget Street crossing. *

It is a constant struggle trying to determine if a train will be at a standstill I have missed appointments and have been late to work due to the unpredictability of the trains in when they stop.

There have been multiple times that I've had to literally go through the town of Agawam through Westfield just to get to Route 20 because a train has been stop for more than a half an hour

It is definitely an inconvenience and anytime that train stops it backs up traffic and every other aspect of coming from Agawam to West Springfield and vice versa there's only so many ways in and out and the train blocking this entrance really affects a lot of the community in a negative way if it could be more predictable or possibly not a full stop covering the passing it would definitely make quality of life in West Springfield and in Agawam much better

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Your Name (First and Last) *

Julia LaBarre

Where do you currently reside? *

☐ Agawam

☒ West Springfield

☐ Other: _____

Please submit any written comments that are relative to the Department of Public Utilities' investigation of CSX's blocking of the Front/Bridget Street crossing. *

3/13/21 - I experienced blocked tracks 1.05pm (likely earlier) till 1.20p.

This has been on going for months and months with the bridge construction also playing a factor and more traffic utilizing this way to get back and forth between agawam and ws.

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Your Name (First and Last) *

Nicole Eutiquio

Where do you currently reside? *

☐ Agawam

☒ West Springfield

☐ Other: _____

Please submit any written comments that are relative to the Department of Public Utilities' investigation of CSX's blocking of the Front/Bridget Street crossing. *

I cross the bridge almost every morning going into Agawam to drop my child off at daycare and I frequently encounter a train stopping on the tracks. This has caused me to be late at work numerous times whether waiting for it to move or having to go around.

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Your Name (First and Last) *

Dennis Miles

Where do you currently reside? *

☐ Agawam

☒ West Springfield

☐ Other: _____

Please submit any written comments that are relative to the Department of Public Utilities' investigation of CSX's blocking of the Front/Bridget Street crossing. *

I have been delayed at this crossing longer than 15 minutes no less than three times in the past two years... and many more times prior to that. This is an on-going concern, exacerbated by the re-construction of the Morgan bridge which limited alternative routes in the recent past.

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Your Name (First and Last) *

Joe smith

Where do you currently reside? *

☐ Agawam

☒ West Springfield

☐ Other: _____

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This is a waste of taxpayer money

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Your Name (First and Last) *

Alex Faust

Where do you currently reside? *

☐ Agawam

☒ West Springfield

☐ Other: _____

Please submit any written comments that are relative to the Department of Public Utilities' investigation of CSX's blocking of the Front/Bridget Street crossing. *

I think CSX should not be able to block this crossing area because if someone is having a medical emergency and tries to cross there but has to go all the way around and get stuck in the traffic of all of the other people that had to go around it could become a bad situation.

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Your Name (First and Last) *

Jennifer Olson

Where do you currently reside? *

☐ Agawam

☒ West Springfield

☐ Other: _____

Please submit any written comments that are relative to the Department of Public Utilities' investigation of CSX's blocking of the Front/Bridget Street crossing. *

I live by Mittineague Park so I go over the tracks quite frequently. There have been times that the train has been there for over an hour. I went to cross the tracks to go do some shopping at Walgreens, Dave's Soda and Pet Food City and grab lunch on my way back. When I went to leave, I saw a huge line of cars going all the way to Mittineague School and all the way up to Sunoco. So I went around to the Agawam bridge by the Eastern States, I also was stuck in traffic there for a few minutes. I went to Walgreens...I was in there for about 20 minutes. Then drove over to Daves...in there for about 10 minutes. Then I went to Friendly's to pick up lunch...I waited there for about 15 minutes. On my way home I decided to see if the train was still there...a long line of cars showed me it was. I turned around, went back over the Agawam bridge...traffic there again. Finally I made it back over to my neighborhood and the train was still there!!! This situation happens all the time. And in some case, the last trailer on the train is right before the tracks. Meaning if they literally pulled up an extra 10 feet, they never would have blocked the tracks to begin with!

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Your Name (First and Last) *

Lorri Twaddle

Where do you currently reside? *

☐ Agawam

☒ West Springfield

☐ Other: _____

Please submit any written comments that are relative to the Department of Public Utilities' investigation of CSX's blocking of the Front/Bridget Street crossing. *

I frequently cross into Agawam over the front Street railroad tracks. It is extremely annoying that they block that crossing for long periods of time. I have seen drivers go around the gates several times to beat the train so they are not stuck there for 20 minutes or more. One time I had been waiting 18 min and the train had passed but the gates had not opened yet, and a frustrated driver went around the gate not knowing there was an Amtrak train coming the other way. The train missed his vehicle by inches. It was a terrifying moment. This has been going on for years and we are all tired of their inconsideration for the problem and dangers this causes. I hope this can be resolved once and for all

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Your Name (First and Last) *

Anthony Ciollaro

Where do you currently reside? *

☐ Agawam

☒ West Springfield

☐ Other: _____

Please submit any written comments that are relative to the Department of Public Utilities' investigation of CSX's blocking of the Front/Bridget Street crossing. *

This has been going on entirely too long and I am glad our representatives are taking action.

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Your Name (First and Last) *

Kathleen Alevras

Where do you currently reside? *

☐ Agawam

☐ West Springfield

☒ Other: West Springfield

Please submit any written comments that are relative to the Department of Public Utilities' investigation of CSX's blocking of the Front/Bridget Street crossing. *

I, like many other WS residents who need to cross the railroad tracks has been stuck in line for far longer than five minutes. This has happened to me dozens of times. While being a frustrating time waiting imagine if an emergency was preventing you from crossing?

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Your Name (First and Last) *

Joseph Breda

Where do you currently reside? *

☐ Agawam

☒ West Springfield

☐ Other: _____

Please submit any written comments that are relative to the Department of Public Utilities' investigation of CSX's blocking of the Front/Bridget Street crossing. *

Railroad should make use of tracks easterly, when making up and breaking down trains,instead of having trains block crossing.

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Your Name (First and Last) *

Timothy Kressler

Where do you currently reside? *

☐ Agawam

☒ West Springfield

☐ Other: _____

Please submit any written comments that are relative to the Department of Public Utilities' investigation of CSX's blocking of the Front/Bridget Street crossing. *

On several occasions this year I have sat for over 30 minutes on the Agawam side of the tracks waiting for the train. One day it was 45 minutes and then I turned around. Also the blinking warning lights do not always work for warning people.

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Your Name (First and Last) *

William Cashman

Where do you currently reside? *

☐ Agawam

☒ West Springfield

☐ Other: _____

Please submit any written comments that are relative to the Department of Public Utilities' investigation of CSX's blocking of the Front/Bridget Street crossing. *

I will not use those streets because I don't usually have time to wait for parked trains to move.

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Your Name (First and Last) *

David Pighetti

Where do you currently reside? *

☐ Agawam

☒ West Springfield

☐ Other: _____

Please submit any written comments that are relative to the Department of Public Utilities' investigation of CSX's blocking of the Front/Bridget Street crossing. *

I have been a West Springfield resident for my entire life (28 years) and have been delayed by that train crossing more times than I can remember. Now that I am a business owner this crossing has delayed me while conducting business costing me time and money in downtime for me and my employees. On the other hand while traveling through this crossing with my family it has caused inconvenience with my children having to be in the car longer than they should on a short travel between towns.

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Your Name (First and Last) *

Donald Nathan

Where do you currently reside? *

☐ Agawam

☒ West Springfield

☐ Other: _____

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Not sure of the date. Possible March 4th or March 11th between noon and 1:15pm a train was blocking the Strathmore RR crossing. I have live stream camera bookmarked because I like seeing the artistic graffiti on boxcars. Check out the camera now 11am Friday March 19, I'd say it's been 30 minutes

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Your Name (First and Last) *

Gregory Sargent

Where do you currently reside? *

☐ Agawam

☒ West Springfield

☐ Other: _____

Please submit any written comments that are relative to the Department of Public Utilities' investigation of CSX's blocking of the Front/Bridget Street crossing. *

There have been weekly occasions that I use the Front/Bridge Street crossing only to find it tied up for quite a while due to 100+ trains, such as CSX, slowly going across and many times stopping. One time there was a lone locomotive stopped at the crossing for quite a while. This is particularly dangerous when an ambulance or fire engine tries to cross.

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Your Name (First and Last) *

Jayson Lacasse

Where do you currently reside? *

☐ Agawam

☒ West Springfield

☐ Other: _____

Please submit any written comments that are relative to the Department of Public Utilities' investigation of CSX's blocking of the Front/Bridget Street crossing. *

I live in West Springfield and work in Agawam. I travel over those tracks twice a day with the only exceptions being when a train is blocking the tracks which is a common occurrence. Many of us rely on the camera video stream because it is so common. It is not abnormal for the train to block the road for an extended period of time and sometimes upwards of an hour.

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Your Name (First and Last) *

Jennifer Burke

Where do you currently reside? *

☐ Agawam

☒ West Springfield

☐ Other: _____

Please submit any written comments that are relative to the Department of Public Utilities' investigation of CSX's blocking of the Front/Bridget Street crossing. *

It is quite common for a train to stop for longer than 5 minutes. In fact, the norm when a train is completely stopped seems to be around 15-30 minutes. Even if I leave the bridge st crossing and go around to the train overpass as an alternate route to get to my destination and see that the train is stopped, I will sometimes still see it stopped when I go back by way of the alternate route. It is a joke to those of us who live near that crossing that is a craps shoot how long you will sit and if the train will be "camped out" or moving.

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Your Name (First and Last) *

Maher Awkal

Where do you currently reside? *

☐ Agawam

☒ West Springfield

☐ Other: _____

Please submit any written comments that are relative to the Department of Public Utilities' investigation of CSX's blocking of the Front/Bridget Street crossing. *

I understand that trains need to pass through streets and have to close them or few minutes while actively crossing. As a Truck driver who drives double trailers or a 53' trailer I cannot back up and turn around when CSX decides to close the road for an hour or 90 min in order for them to swap carts. This is ridiculous and often time put us in violation of our ELD logs. Mind you I pick up trailers from CSX rail yard in West Springfield. We definitely need a solution for this.

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Your Name (First and Last) *

Jeffrey Lawrence

Where do you currently reside? *

☐ Agawam

☒ West Springfield

☐ Other: _____

Please submit any written comments that are relative to the Department of Public Utilities' investigation of CSX's blocking of the Front/Bridget Street crossing. *

I live on a hill overlooking the rail and bridge crossing, and as I telecommute, my office window directly views the same. While I have never explicitly timed and noted the blockages, I feel very confident to say they are a regular occurrence-- several times a day-- and in very few instances indeed are they LESS than five minutes, typically with a train stopped dead on the tracks. In fact, as I am writing this (11:06 AM on 3/19/2021), there is a train stopped on the tracks that has been there for at least five minutes now, closer to ten or fifteen. I can see traffic backed up halfway down the bridge into Agawam. (I cannot see the West Springfield side clearly, so cannot comment on that).

It is quite apparent to me that CSX is in frequent and regular violation of this regulation. It is, at best, a nuisance. At best.

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Your Name (First and Last) *

Jean Germain

Where do you currently reside? *

☐ Agawam

☒ West Springfield

☐ Other: _____

Please submit any written comments that are relative to the Department of Public Utilities' investigation of CSX's blocking of the Front/Bridget Street crossing. *

Lights have helped, but over the years I have seen some trains take up to an hour of a delay. Maybe if there some kind of schedule we could check, so we had a better idea of when maybe longer trains would be stuck. Nov I know trains probably don't know length of cars too far ahead, but it might help to at least know when or what kind if train would be crossing .

Best case scenario would be bridge over tracks...its frustrating. At this point anything you can do to help is appreciated, just like the lights.

Thank you

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Your Name (First and Last) *

Emily Corey

Where do you currently reside? *

☐ Agawam

☒ West Springfield

☐ Other: _____

Please submit any written comments that are relative to the Department of Public Utilities' investigation of CSX's blocking of the Front/Bridget Street crossing. *

I'm a lifelong resident of West Springfield, and I work in Agawam and have family in Agawam. I use this route over the tracks multiple times daily. The usually lengthy and frequent blocking of the crossing by CSX has become unacceptable and unsafe. It's one of the main and most direct routes between West Springfield and Agawam. We have the many events through the year at the Big E fairgrounds on Memorial Avenue that tie up traffic on Memorial Avenue as well as Rte 5, and I 91 which makes this situation not only an inconvenience but in case of an emergency, or a catastrophic event, this could be a matter of life or death.

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Your Name (First and Last) *

Valerie Caron

Where do you currently reside? *

☐ Agawam

☒ West Springfield

☐ Other: _____

Please submit any written comments that are relative to the Department of Public Utilities' investigation of CSX's blocking of the Front/Bridget Street crossing. *

I live in West Side near Mittineague Park and work in Suffield CT, 4 minutes past 6 Flags. The trains routinely park on the tracks for periods of time in excess of 5 minutes, often during rush hour, and often backing up and pulling forward repeatedly. In the past, there was a number for CSX that you could call and they would tell you their expected time to depart that intersection at the bridge, but once bridge construction began, the number was disconnected. While I appreciate the effort with the signals for the train being on the tracks, it often doesn't function in bright sun or goes off in the rain, so we have come not to trust them. Most days we are taking the long route through town and down 91S. Instead of 10.5 miles, it is 15 miles each way. That is an extra 9 miles of driving each day, 45 extra per week, and an extra 2250 miles in a year... just so I can be sure I get to work on time. I truly appreciate this investigation and hope that CSX complies with being a good neighbor.

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Your Name (First and Last) *

Kimberly Dotiwalla

Where do you currently reside? *

☐ Agawam

☒ West Springfield

☐ Other: _____

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I have repeatedly been blocked from entering Agawam and returning to West Springfield by trains left sitting at the end of Bridge Street.

I have waited up to 15 minutes and then turned my car around wasting time and money having to drive around to the other access point. It is beyond frustrating. The town of West Springfield has even provided flashing lights to try and negate this safety issue.

Examples are : Arriving late to pick up children from school, having doctors appointments canceled because your 30 minutes late. Weekly meetings and having to leave 45 min early because you don't know what is sitting in your way.

I am very pleased you have opened this investigation. My expectation is the trains will no longer be using the railroad crossing as their parking lot.

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Your Name (First and Last) *

Al Arment

Where do you currently reside? *

☐ Agawam

☒ West Springfield

☐ Other: _____

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Although I do not believe that the Railroad is "deliberately" blocking the Front St crossing, I DO believe that there should be a study done, to either make a bridge to go OVER the railroad tracks (which could come done into the empty, unused parking lot across the street) or to make an UNDERPASS to go UNDER the railroad crossing. There are other ways to fix this issue and if Boston can have their "Big Dig" project and Springfield can "re-do" the I291-I91 interchange, then the State should either build an overpass, or an underpass to alleviate the problem.

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Your Name (First and Last) *

Leah Negrucci

Where do you currently reside? *

☐ Agawam

☒ West Springfield

☐ Other: _____

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Yes it is frustrating when the train is stopped down by front Street for an extended period of time. The flashing lights that were recently put up to let you know a train is there to help although I wonder if they are able to stop before the railroad crossing so cars can still go through-which was the case this morning when I crossed over the train was stopped just to the left of the car crossing which was fine because it was not holding up traffic. Now I don't know if this is a possibility or not but if they have to stop and could stop either before or after the crossing it would relieve the frustration. It seem to be much more frequent during big E traffic time when there was lots of cars trying to get home after a day spent at the Big E.

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Your Name (First and Last) *

Cindy white

Where do you currently reside? *

☒ Agawam

☐ West Springfield

☐ Other: _____

Please submit any written comments that are relative to the Department of Public Utilities' investigation of CSX's blocking of the Front/Bridget Street crossing. *

I have lived in both West Springfield and Agawam now traveling back and forth over that bridge for years. I have had to turn around in the middle of the street because a train was stopped there for way more than 10 minutes. I have waited sometimes for it to end only for it to just stop. It's time to do something about this. Thank you.

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Your Name (First and Last) *

Pamela Fenno

Where do you currently reside? *

☐ Agawam

☒ West Springfield

☐ Other: _____

Please submit any written comments that are relative to the Department of Public Utilities' investigation of CSX's blocking of the Front/Bridget Street crossing. *

Please consider not blocking the roadway more than 5 minutes or having some sort of signal if it will be longer so you know to turn around. Thank you for installing the lights on intersections before the tracks telling you if there is a train, they have been quite helpful.

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Your Name (First and Last) *

George David

Where do you currently reside? *

☐ Agawam

☒ West Springfield

☐ Other: _____

Please submit any written comments that are relative to the Department of Public Utilities' investigation of CSX's blocking of the Front/Bridget Street crossing. *

For years and years we have taken this route and frequently have encountered the long train wait. As such, we usually turn around and go around back through town, probably taking way more time than to wait it out. It truly is a nuisance, but, might be just something to deal with and not fight. We, as drivers, have options, and the trains might not. Maybe posting the train times would help us to avoid this. We all must be reasonable.

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Your Name (First and Last) *

Riccardo Racicot

Where do you currently reside? *

☐ Agawam

☒ West Springfield

☐ Other: _____

Please submit any written comments that are relative to the Department of Public Utilities' investigation of CSX's blocking of the Front/Bridget Street crossing. *

CSX's blocking of the Front street crossing has been a significant inconvenience to myself and my family greater than 10 times in the past two years. As someone who frequently crosses from Westside to Agawam and then Southwick, I have relied on this route with the current bridge work causing delays and much traffic in Westfield. However often times the Front street crossing is blocked for extended, unpredictable periods of time. This has over doubled the length of a single commute multiple times. There is no schedule, no predictability and no accountability from CSX. This is a public way and they should be required to follow the rules and punished when they do not. This has been a significant issue so thank you for investigating it.

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Your Name (First and Last) *

Nicholas larivee

Where do you currently reside? *

☐ Agawam

☒ West Springfield

☐ Other: _____

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This is long overdue. For as long as I can remember, the intersection/crossing in question has been a nuisance. I've seen the crossing blocked for over 60 minutes. I've also seen an ambulance have to be Re-routed due to the crossing being occupied at a stand still more than once. I hope something is actually done this time to bring some peace and solutions to the tax paying citizens that this effects daily.

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Your Name (First and Last) *

Nicholas larivee

Where do you currently reside? *

☐ Agawam

☒ West Springfield

☐ Other: _____

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Your Name (First and Last) *

Melissa Dorobisz

Where do you currently reside? *

☐ Agawam

☒ West Springfield

☐ Other: _____

Please submit any written comments that are relative to the Department of Public Utilities' investigation of CSX's blocking of the Front/Bridget Street crossing. *

I have been stopped here numerous times and have had to turn around and find alternative routes home due to waiting for train to move. I have waited well beyond 15 minutes in such cases.

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Your Name (First and Last) *

Laura Gronski

Where do you currently reside? *

☐ Agawam

☒ West Springfield

☐ Other: _____

Please submit any written comments that are relative to the Department of Public Utilities' investigation of CSX's blocking of the Front/Bridget Street crossing. *

I have been stuck at the tracks more times than I care to count. Very frustrating watching the train slow down and stop. Then it starts backing up only to go forward and stop again. Then you give up and go the alternative route back to Rt. 20 and down to River Rd. Only to get stuck in traffic at the under construction bridge because everyone else has gone that way too trying to get into Agawam. Took me almost 45 minutes one day to get to Agawam.

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Your Name (First and Last) *

Anthony Cestari

Where do you currently reside? *

☐ Agawam

☒ West Springfield

☐ Other: _____

Please submit any written comments that are relative to the Department of Public Utilities' investigation of CSX's blocking of the Front/Bridget Street crossing. *

Back in the 50s there was talk of building a bridge from the Agawam hill to the West Springfield hill or rebuilding the old bridge. Well they decided to rebuild the old bridge. The railway is not leaving. Perhaps between the State,federal,and the railroad they could build that bridge

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Your Name (First and Last) *

Danny Devlin

Where do you currently reside? *

☐ Agawam

☒ West Springfield

☐ Other: _____

Please submit any written comments that are relative to the Department of Public Utilities' investigation of CSX's blocking of the Front/Bridget Street crossing. *

I personally have witnessed the public way being in question being blocked numerous times for well over 5 minutes at a time. I could submit a video as proof if needed. Also most people in line end up turning around and seeking alternate routes because most people who use that intersection are used to it taking alot longer than 5 minutes and finding another route is quicker.

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Your Name (First and Last) *

Susan Pettazzoni

Where do you currently reside? *

☒ Agawam

☐ West Springfield

☐ Other: _____

Please submit any written comments that are relative to the Department of Public Utilities' investigation of CSX's blocking of the Front/Bridget Street crossing. *

In response to CSX blocking of Front/Bridge Street crossing I have personally experienced well over the time noted by the Department Inspector from both directions. While turning around to find a different way was the solution, to many times experiencing this violation from CSX, it should be noted that I have witnessed not only a train blocking the way to an appointment in West Springfield, it was also noted that on my way home the same train was still blocking from the other direction forcing a change in direction for me to get back to Agawam.

Please note this is not a new situation, both towns of Agawam and West Springfield have tried to work with CSX over the years to come to a viable solution, yet met with the same stand-still as the train blocking the public way.....obstruction!

This form was created inside of City of West Springfield, Massachusetts.

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