



**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

**March 30, 2021**

**Congressman Richard E. Neal**  
**Public Statement for Massachusetts Department of Public Utilities' CSX Hearing**

Thank you Mayor Reichelt, Mayor Sapelli, Chairman Nelson, Commissioner Fraser, and Commissioner Hayden for allowing me to submit a public statement regarding the Department of Public Utilities' investigation into CSX Transportation and their operations on the Front Street rail crossing. Residents of Agawam and West Springfield can attest to the proposed inconvenience stemming directly from CSX operations along the rail crossing, which serves as a point of intersection between Front Street and Bridge Street in the towns of West Springfield and Agawam respectively. This highly traveled route connects two prominent commercial areas in both towns; specifically, Main and North Streets in Agawam, and Route 20 in West Springfield, where residents travel for their morning and evening commutes, or to frequent a number of local small businesses. Furthermore, emergency vehicles providing critical care to local residents rely on this route to easily access both towns. The delay documented and submitted to DPU on February 17<sup>th</sup>, in which a CSX train was parked for 38 minutes, is just one example of what the residents of Agawam and West Springfield deal with on a daily basis. Despite countless efforts by both towns to address this issue with CSX, their disregard to accommodate the concerns of and work with town officials has persisted. CSX preventing the Town of West Springfield from cleaning their waste lines, which fall in their easement, in addition to poor maintenance of their property and failure to support the town's efforts in addressing a bridge nearing disrepair, has only exacerbated the grievances resulting from the issue at hand. I applaud Mayor Reichelt, Mayor Sapelli and town officials for their efforts in bringing this matter to the attention of the state, and I thank DPU for holding this public hearing, thereby allowing residents to express their concerns and share the frustration they have endured for decades.

Sincerely,

Richard E. Neal  
Chairman  
House Ways and Means Committee