



Via Electronic Mail

September 9, 2022

The Honorable Joseph R. Biden
President of the United States
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Biden,

The consumer packaged goods industry — the manufacturers of food, beverage, household and personal care products — writes again to urge your support for preserving freight rail service continuity and averting disruptions. Our member companies depend on freight rail services every day to ensure the availability, affordability and accessibility of essential products. It would devastate the nation's already struggling supply chains if a labor agreement between the freight railroads and their unions cannot be reached before the September 16 deadline.

Consumer Brands has already encouraged the Biden administration's appointment of a Presidential Emergency Board (PEB) to ensure resolution of labor negotiations. Although the recommendations of the PEB are non-binding, they are often crucial in assisting the parties to reach voluntary agreement. As the negotiating deadline nears, however, we are concerned that additional action may be required to prevent disruptions to our nation's rail network and, by extension, the CPG industry and broader economy.

If a voluntary agreement cannot be reached, Consumer Brands supports Congressional action to finalize negotiations based on the PEB recommendations and do what is in its authority to prevent service disruptions that will have a profound impact on the availability of critical products. The PEB's recommendations have already been accepted by multiple rail labor unions, including the International Association of Machinists, the Transportation Communications Union and the Brotherhood of Railway Carmen. We remain hopeful that additional unions will finalize agreement in the coming days, but also want to ensure that plans are in place to help prevent freight rail service disruptions and shutdowns.

With product availability, inflation and cost challenges continuing to affect American consumers, the supply chains cannot afford another crisis in the form of a freight rail strike. Even before the pandemic, the CPG industry expressed concern at declining rail performance, and we believe there are opportunities to both preserve business continuity amid labor talks and take a long-view approach to policies that will strategically improve our nation's freight rail system.

Failure to finalize an agreement before the September 16 deadline will hurt U.S. consumers and imperil the availability, affordability and accessibility of everyday essential products. Consumer Brands appreciates your attention to this issue, as well as your continued efforts to strengthen supply chain resiliency and competitiveness.



Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tom Madrecki".

Tom Madrecki
Vice President, Supply Chain and
Logistics
Consumer Brands Association

Cc: The Honorable Kamala Harris, Vice President of the United States
The Honorable Nancy Pelosi, Speaker, U.S. House of Representatives
The Honorable Charles Schumer, Majority Leader, U.S. Senate
The Honorable Mitch McConnell, Minority Leader, U.S. Senate
The Honorable Kevin McCarthy, Minority Leader, U.S. House of Representatives
The Honorable Patty Murray, Chair, Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions
Committee
The Honorable Peter DeFazio, Chairman, House Committee on Transportation and
Infrastructure
The Honorable Sam Graves, Ranking Member, House Committee on Transportation and
Infrastructure