

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

December 2, 2015

The Honorable Hal Rogers
Chairman
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Nita Lowey
Ranking Member
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Rogers and Ranking Member Lowey,

We write to you today to request an increase in funding to the Pipeline & Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA) operation account by \$500,000 in the FY16 Omnibus Appropriations bill. Given the recent train derailments across the country, improving rail and pipeline safety must be a top priority.

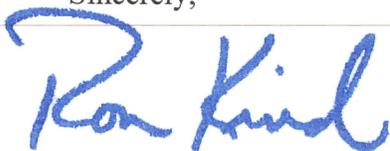
Wisconsin and Illinois have seen a significant increase in rail traffic over the past few years, much of it involving the transport of volatile crude oil by rail through our communities and along the Mississippi River. According to the Association of American Railroads, U.S. freight railroads delivered 435,560 carloads of crude oil in 2013, or roughly 300 million barrels, compared to 9,500 carloads in 2008. In addition, crude imports by rail from Canada have increased more than 20-fold since 2011. This hazardous material, often carried in outdated DOT-111 tank cars, has the ability to cause grave harm to both the people in our communities and the natural resources that surround us.

On March 5, 2015 a BNSF oil train derailed in a remote area near Galena, Illinois. Twenty-one of the 105 cars, containing Bakken formation crude oil, derailed and caught fire, leaking 110,000 gallons of crude oil. On November 7, twenty-five DOT-111 tank cars derailed in Alma, Wisconsin and five of the cars leaked nearly 20,000 gallons of ethanol into the Mississippi River. Fortunately, no injuries were reported at either incident.

In Alma, local emergency personnel requested a foam trailer be sent to the scene as a precautionary measure in case of a fire, but the nearest trailer was located nearly sixty miles away in La Crosse, WI. In the event of a fire or other serious disaster, such precious time cannot be afforded. It is imperative that we provide our first responders with the resources they need to properly respond to a derailment.

Specifically, the increase in funding for PHMSA should be used to develop caches of firefighting equipment and foam to be strategically placed along routes with a high frequency of trains carrying crude oil. These caches will facilitate the rapid deployment of equipment and trained personnel to minimize response time, property and environmental damage in case a rail disaster does occur. Thank you for your time and consideration of this request.

Sincerely,



Ron Kind
Member of Congress



Cheri Bustos
Member of Congress