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TO THE 88<sup>TH</sup> TEXAS LEGISLATURE:

Our organizations are committed to working with the Legislature to enhance safety and mobility for Texans across the State. A crucial component of Texas' multimodal transportation system is its railroad network. This system spans over 10,500 miles of track in Texas, alone and connects cities, rural communities, ports, industrial sites, agricultural centers, and many other facets of our economy. Texas railroads also facilitate passenger service with three Amtrak routes connecting Texas to the rest of the country.

The size of this system also presents challenges. The latest data by the Federal Railroad Administration shows that Texas has the most public grade crossings of any state with over 9,800 crossings. This is 20 percent more crossings than the second highest state (Illinois, with approximately 7,800 crossings). Across the country, 2,145 highway-rail grade crossing collisions occurred in 2021, of which 247 occurred here in Texas. Unfortunately, Texas leads the country in these types of collisions. The sheer scope of the rail network combined with increasing freight rail demand and increasing traffic patterns by motorists and the trucking industry, make separating Texas' most congested grade crossings a top priority.

To assist in this endeavor, we are calling on the Legislature to enhance mobility and public safety by appropriating the necessary funds to support local grade separation projects. Projects such as these will help our communities to reduce collision statistics and make, both, our roads and railroads safer. These efforts will also create jobs in local communities across Texas and promote fluidity on roads and rails alike, fostering our multimodal transportation system and economic development.

Investments such as these are essential to protecting Texas communities and helping us continue to move freight safely and efficiently on our rail network. We look forward to working with you to promote public safety and mobility on our transportation network for all Texans.

Sincerely,

CC: The Texas Congressional Delegation