



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
CITY OF CHICAGO

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CONTACT:

Mayor's Press Office

312.744.3334

press@cityofchicago.org

**MAYOR EMANUEL CALLS FOR CRACKING DOWN ON UNSAFE TRANSPORTATION OF
HAZARDOUS MATERIALS**

*Highlights Five Common-Sense Measures to Reduce the Risk of Rail Accidents and Calls for a National
Hazardous Materials Freight Fee*

Mayor Rahm Emanuel today spoke at the winter meeting of the United States Conference of Mayors (USCM) where he called for improved oversight of companies transporting hazardous materials and crude oil by rail through America's cities. Railways are used to transport these dangerous substances right through the heart of American cities and Mayor Emanuel called on other mayors to target this emerging threat with federal partners to reduce the risk of accidents while protecting residents and property. Revenue from the fee would be dedicated to improving America's aging rail infrastructure.

"Freight train accidents across the United States should be more than a wake-up call," said Mayor Emanuel. "Railroads are the backbone of our country, providing an economic lifeline to Chicago and communities across the nation. These incidents must move us to take action so we can strengthen safety standards and employ new technology to prevent future harm."

Mayor Emanuel highlighted five common-sense measures that would make communities safer by reducing the risk of the next catastrophe.

1. Call on the federal government to impose a hazardous materials freight fee on companies who extract crude oil and the industrial consumers of it. This effort will make transportation safer and comply with regulations. The fees will be an account to support rebuilding of America's aging rail infrastructure to keep our communities safe.
2. Support the Department of Transportation in the building of safer cars.
3. Build safer railroads using better technology, which could serve as a life-saving backstop when human error occurs. This should be deployed around the nation, especially on tracks where hazardous material is hauled.
4. Mandate those who transport hazardous materials on railways to carry the necessary insurance to compensate for the loss of life and property after an accident.
5. Better understand what railways are transporting and the risks they pose.

Philadelphia Mayor Michael Nutter, Madison Mayor Paul Soglin, Kansas City Mayor Sly James, Milwaukee Mayor Tom Barrett, and Peoria Mayor Jim Ardis have already signed on in support of Mayor Emanuel's call to action.

121 NORTH LASALLE STREET, ROOM 507, CHICAGO, ILLINOIS 60602

“Rail safety and the monitoring of this industry needs to be a priority,” said Milwaukee Mayor Tom Barrett. “I applaud Mayor Emanuel for taking the lead and approaching this on a national level. It’s my hope that the Department of Transportation will move swiftly before another incident occurs. “

“I am happy to support these common sense proposals which will protect our residents while maintaining the integrity of the rail system,” said Madison Mayor Paul Soglin.

Rail infrastructure improvements are essential to avoid the risk of transporting hazardous materials. The Department of Transportation is currently considering new rules to improve construction standards to make safer railcars. While no single rule or regulation can eliminate rail accidents, these common-sense steps will reduce the possible danger. Building a 21st century infrastructure, using 21st century technology will create jobs and boost economic opportunity while protecting communities.

“As mayors, there is no greater responsibility than ensuring the safety of our residents, especially our children and I encourage everyone to share other ideas to protect our quality of life,” said Mayor Emanuel.

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