



June 22, 2020

Chairman Jason Sheppard  
House Government Operations Committee  
PO Box 30014  
Lansing MI 48933

**Re: Support – HB5861**

Dear Chairman Sheppard:

Safety is the core value at CN. We welcome opportunities to partner with all levels of government to enhance the safety of the public and our operations. As the largest railroad in Michigan, we thank you for considering the establishment of a state-sponsored grade separation program. CN believes that HB 5861 provides the proper mechanism for doing so, and we fully support the measure. With the Governor and legislature considering dramatic increases to Michigan's transportation budget for roads, developing a grade separation program is a 'first things first' endeavor. The ability of local road authorities and MDOT to integrate grade separation planning into any new potential road work is critical. Conflicts at public, at-grade crossings are public matters to be addressed by public agencies. HB 5861 acknowledges the public issue and embraces this responsibility to provide a safety-focused solution to this situation in Michigan.

CN's operations cross the state's Lower and Upper Peninsula's along 908 miles of privately owned track with rail yards in Battle Creek, Flint, Port Huron, and Flat Rock as well as Escanaba and Gladstone. CN has an international rail crossing at Sault Ste. Marie. Michigan is home to the Paul Tellier Tunnel between Port Huron and Sarnia, which serves as the border crossing for CN train traffic moving between Eastern Canada and the U.S. Midwest. One in four finished automobiles built in Michigan is moved on a CN train. CN has two automotive distribution facilities in the state, including at Cory Yard outside Lansing at the Delta Township General Motors plant, two CN CargoFlo® bulk handling centers as well as forest products and metals distribution facilities. CN also has an intermodal facility in Ferndale, in suburban Detroit. CN hosts several Michigan Amtrak trains, including trains terminating in Port Huron and Pontiac. All of these communities grew up around, and many times because of, our tracks and yards. As our customers' business needs have grown, rail volumes across the state have increased. As a result, conflicts at public, at-grade crossings are becoming an increasing concern for communities.

The CN network in Michigan also includes over 1,000 public, at-grade crossings. When appropriate to our continental network, CN has made operational or service adjustments to assist in mitigating the impacts at public at-grade crossings. Nevertheless, the larger issue is that there are simply too many public at-grade crossings on the rail network in Michigan to eliminate these conflicts while providing needed service to Michigan industries.

The real solution to limit the impacts at public, at-grade crossings would be to reduce the overall number of crossings on the rail networks in Michigan. This could be accomplished in many ways, but the most common would be to close the at-grade crossing permanently to vehicular traffic or construct a grade separation to

eliminate the conflict between motorists and railroad operations. HB5861 establishes a safety-focused and innovative program to provide communities a permanent solution to these conflicts via grade separations.

Furthermore, HB 5861 provides a flexible framework to craft innovative partnerships between public, private, and non-profit entities to address these conflicts at public, at-grade crossings. CN routinely works with public agencies across our entire network to address issues at grade crossings, including the development of grade separations.

On behalf of the 1,095 CN railroaders who live, work and commute in Michigan, including myself, we encourage favorable consideration of HB 5861.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Larry Lloyd", is written over a light gray rectangular background.

Larry Lloyd  
Manager, State and Local Government Affairs  
CN Railway