



July 19, 2021

Sean Rogers  
Director – Safety Policy and Regulatory Affairs  
Transport Canada  
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Dear Mr. Rogers:

The following letter is a response to Transport Canada's recently published proposed amendments to the Grade Crossings Regulations in the Canada Gazette. The proposed amendments create three new categories of grade crossings: 'high priority', 'low risk' and 'other'. The creation of low-risk grade crossings means that many private field-to-field crossings used by farmers would be exempt from making safety upgrades under the proposed amendments.

We appreciate that Transport Canada has taken the initiative to make amendments to the Grade Crossings Regulations after seeking feedback from farm organizations and other stakeholders across the country in January 2021. However, these proposed changes do not go far enough.

Grade crossing maintenance and upgrades have been the responsibility of railway companies. However, the Regulations have created the term 'shared responsibility' which has created ambiguity regarding responsibility for costs associated with private grade crossing upgrades.

Despite the proposed changes to the Regulations some farmers owning private grade crossings will still need to make safety improvements to their crossing and will bear the financial burden associated with the upgrade. Farmers who have a private grade crossing but do not fit in the low-risk grade crossing category will be required to make these improvements by November 2024.

We are supportive of improving the safety at grade crossings across the country. However, this should not come at the expense of a farmer's bottom line. The top two class 1 carriers in the country spent over \$4.5 billion in capital investments in 2020 on their railway infrastructure. We believe that class 1 carriers have the financial capacity to fund safety upgrades at private grade crossings across Canada and this cost should not come out of the pockets of farmers.

Crossings that provide access to adjacent farmland and other properties are an essential part of Canada's national transportation system. It is important that these crucial access points are maintained and receive the required upgrades without imposing additional costs onto agricultural producers.

The Alberta Federation of Agriculture, the Agricultural Producers Association of Saskatchewan and Keystone Agricultural Producers are asking Transport Canada to make additional amendments to the Grade Crossings Regulations that would result in railway companies bearing all financial costs associated with safety upgrades to private grade crossings that do not qualify under the 'low risk' category.

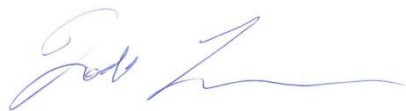
Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Bill Campbell

President, Keystone Agricultural Producers



Todd Lewis

President, Agricultural Producers Association of Saskatchewan



Lynn Jacobson

President, Alberta Federation of Agriculture

cc. Hon. Marie-Claude Bibeau, Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food

Hon. Omar Alghabra, Minister of Transport