



August 6, 2025

The Honorable Eric Burlison
1108 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Burlison,

On behalf of National Taxpayers Union, the nation's oldest taxpayer advocacy organization, I write to express our strong support for H.R. 4756, the Freights First Act. This legislation marks a critical step toward modernizing our national freight infrastructure and restoring commonsense priorities in our transportation policy. NTU is proud to endorse H.R. 4756 and encourages all members to co-sponsor this important pro-taxpayer legislation.

As the backbone of our economy, America's freight system plays an essential role in ensuring the smooth movement of goods, from farm to factory to store shelves. As you may already know, 38% of all rail traffic is directly tied to international trade, with 543 million tons of goods moving through U.S. ports and across borders via rail. Yet, for decades, freight has been treated as an afterthought in federal infrastructure planning—overlooked in favor of urban transit projects and regulatory schemes that often ignore economic realities.

The Freights First Act corrects this imbalance by recognizing that moving goods efficiently is foundational to economic growth, job creation, and national security. Specifically, it would eliminate Amtrak's unfair track prioritization over freight railroads within 50 miles of a port or rail yard. This change will break bottlenecks or congestion around trade centers and reduce supply chain disruptions, lower shipping costs, and improve competitiveness for American businesses large and small.

At a time when Americans are facing rising prices, strained supply chains, and growing uncertainty in global markets, we cannot afford to let freight bottlenecks and outdated infrastructure hold our economy back. A reliable and efficient freight network reduces costs for consumers, creates good-paying jobs in industries like logistics and manufacturing, and strengthens our resilience against international shocks.

At the same time, Amtrak is a net-loss enterprise despite generous taxpayer subsidies and advantages, and it makes little economic sense for it to be given a right of preference over freight. Amtrak has not had a profitable year since it was founded in 1971 and is only afloat due to the tens of billions of dollars from taxpayers.

The Freights First Act is a pro-growth infrastructure bill that will give certainty to carriers and businesses alike. By centering freight rail in our national transportation strategy, we can best support an industry that connects all corners of our country. Again, NTU commends you for introducing this important legislation and we look forward to working with you to help it become law.

Sincerely,

Thomas Aiello
Senior Director of Government Affairs