

Governor Dayton - Executive Order to Establish a Freight Rail Council

EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT



MARK DAYTON
GOVERNOR

Executive Order

Establishing the Freight Rail Council

I, Mark Dayton, Governor of the State of Minnesota, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and applicable statutes, do hereby issue this Executive Order:

Whereas, railroads are critical to the movement of goods in the State of Minnesota, providing energy-efficient transportation of 25% of all freight in Minnesota by weight; and

Whereas, the State of Minnesota relies on rail transportation to support a thriving economy by providing manufacturers and consumers with access to world markets; and

Whereas, the State of Minnesota's freight rail network is over 4,500 miles with 22 railroads, the 8th highest rail mileage in the nation; and

Whereas, the Minnesota Department of Transportation estimates that 25% of current freight travels by rail and that traffic will grow by 25-40% by 2040; and

Whereas, railroads employ over 4,500 people in the State of Minnesota

Whereas, derailments especially those involving hazardous materials pose safety risks to our communities, environment and economy; and

Whereas, federal agencies have jurisdiction over many aspects of rail safety, ensuring common carrier obligations are met and rates are set fairly; and

Whereas, the State of Minnesota participates in the Federal Railroad Administration's State Rail Safety Participation program and Minnesota's Department of Transportation has jurisdiction to inspect track, signal and train control, motive power and equipment, operating practices, hazardous materials, highway-rail grade crossings, and any other duties described in the federal State Rail Safety Participation program; and

Interagency and External Committee Framework

Freight Rail Council

- **Appointed/Invited:** Commissioners from MnDOT, DPS, MPCA, DEED, Commerce, Agriculture, Revenue, IRRRB, Metcouncil; Class 1 Railroads, Amtrak, shortlines as available, city, county and labor
- **Objectives:** Promote dialogue and communication between the state and Railroads; identify areas of risk and opportunities for changes to operating practices, legislation, policy; identify and support opportunities to promote railroads ability to support our economy. Meets 2-3x per year.

Cabinet Level Interagency Committee

- **Participants:** Commissioners and Assistant/Deputy Commissioners from MnDOT, DPS, MPCA, DEED, Commerce, Agriculture, Revenue, IRRRB, Metcouncil
- **Objectives:** Review and provide strategic direction to the Working Group; support promoting dialogue and partnership between agencies. Meets 2-3x per year.

Interagency Working Group

- **Participants:** Program Managers/Supervisors/Subject Matter Experts from MnDOT, DPS, MPCA, DEED, Commerce, Agriculture, Revenue, IRRRB, Metcouncil
- **Objectives:** Advise senior leaders on key issues/recommendations relating to freight rail; identify a work plan; understand gaps in our emergency or safety related work; promote opportunities for economic development and mobility. Meets 8-10x per year or as needed.

Topic areas

Communications and Community Engagement

- Community Engagement – best practices on community engagement
- Communications – educate legislators and other local elected on Council's work; educate each other on our organizations/operations; develop proactive model for communicating with each other

Safety

- Incident response
 - Communications during an incident
 - Best practices and lessons learned from past incidents
 - Other models – Wakota CAER
- Grade crossings, inspections, trespassing, police authority; drone use

Economic Development

- Shipper specific topics
- Grants/funding/incentives to increase rail served businesses
- Education for city managers and economic development directors on rail service
- Passenger projects that promote economic development