



Norfolk Southern Corporation
111 West Washington Street
Suite 1520
Chicago, IL 60602
Telephone (330) 936-2189

Herbert Smith
Government Relations
Executive Director

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Representative Jason Sheppard
Chairman
Michigan House Committee on Government Operations
Lansing, Michigan 48909

Re: HB 5861 Letter of Support

Dear Chairman Sheppard and members of the Committee on Government Operations,

Norfolk Southern applauds the Michigan legislature's efforts to prioritize safety, mobility, and economic development in local communities by introducing HB 5861, a state funded program to grade separate the most problematic railroad-roadway crossings throughout the state.

Where the federal government once was the primary driver of surface transportation policy, and in turn generously awarded earmarks to complete local infrastructure projects like grade separations in places like Monroe, today the responsibility has fallen onto states' shoulders.

HB 5861 is modeled off Indiana's successful Local Trax Rail Overpass Program, which in 2018 awarded \$121 million in state matching funds through a competitive grant application administered by INDOT toward high-priority railroad grade separations, crossing closures, and other safety improvements at railroad intersections with local roads.

The Illinois legislature also recognizes the importance of funding a robust grade crossing safety program to the tune of tens of millions of dollars annually to upgrade dangerous at-grade vehicular and pedestrian crossings with new warning devices as well as construct new underpasses and bridges below and above busy railroad corridors.

It now is Michigan's turn to climb aboard this train that continues to pick up momentum throughout Midwest legislatures.

On behalf of the 750 employees operating approximately 500 miles of track including 330 grade crossings throughout the State of Michigan, we ask that the House Committee on Government Operations pass HB 5861.

Sincerely,

Herbert Smith