

Press



Release

11 New Hempstead Road, New City, NY (845) 638-5100 Fax: (845) 638-5675 e-mail legclerk@co.rockland.ny.us.

For Immediate Release

Contact: **Hon. Alden H. Wolfe, Chairman** **(845) 638-5269**
 Hon. Harriet Cornell **(845) 638-5753**
 Hon. Nancy Low-Hogan **(845) 638-5751**
 Betsy Saetre, Community Relations Coordinator (845) 638-5184

County Legislators Call Upon USDOT to Issue More Stringent Regulations that Govern CSX Rail Transport of Hazardous Liquids

New City, NY (March 27, 2015) –The Chairman of the Rockland County Legislature Alden H. Wolfe and Legislators Harriet Cornell and Nancy Low-Hogan sponsored a resolution that was passed unanimously at the March 16th meeting of the County Legislature to call attention to heightened concerns over the transport of highly flammable Bakken crude oil and other hazardous liquids on the CSX rail line that runs through the county from Bear Mountain to the New Jersey Border. The resolution calls upon the US Department of Transportation to give immediate attention to broadening regulations that govern rail transport of hazardous liquids.

The resolution also states support for more stringent safety regulations advocated by US Senators Kirsten Gillibrand and Charles Schumer and Congresswoman Nita Lowey that include:

- Increasing the stability and safety of DOT-111 tanker cars by retrofitting to make them more resilient against puncture damage on impact and corrosion; eventual complete phase out of DOT-111 cars
- Reduced speed limit for urban to densely populated suburban areas (such as Rockland)
- Adherence to new Federal Railroad Administration regulations that require proper labeling of the contents of cars
- Increased transparency and improvement in communications between rail line personnel and first responders to protect public health, safety and the environment

The County experienced two near misses in the recent past when in December of 2013, a truck collided with a CSX train at the Pineview Avenue crossing in West Nyack and more recently in October of 2014, when a car collided with a CSX train, north of Bear Mountain. Last week, state and federal inspectors found five defects, some identified as critical, along the track stretching from Newburgh to Haverstraw. Critical defects included deteriorated cross ties in Fort Montgomery and non-critical defects found in Haverstraw and Fort Montgomery were related to loose switch bolts and insufficient ballast.

More recent incidents in West Virginia, North Dakota and Ontario, Canada and the memory of the 2013 rail accident in Quebec that claimed the lives of 47 people highlight the need for major reform said Chairman Wolfe. "We need safer, more durable tanker cars and the railroad industry must come to understand that safety is more important than the industry's concern for efficiency in delivery. Lower speed limits through populated areas where the result of an accident or derailment could have impact on the population and the environment is just common sense. Rockland's CSX line crosses through populated residential areas, in the vicinity of an elementary school and along major water sources such as Lake Deforest and the Hackensack River."

Legislator Harriet Cornell stated: "CSX trains with 100 tanker cars loaded with highly volatile Bakken crude oil pass within 100 feet of Lake DeForest, Rockland's sole reservoir, threatening our water supply. I am joining with New York's federal elected officials in calling for another rule-making process to cover the volatility issue and the need to make crude oil less volatile before being put into freight rail tank cars. Crude oil that is transported by pipeline is stabilized to reduce volatility, but that process is not currently required for rail transport--and that is an unacceptable hazard."

Legislator Nancy Low Hogan added, "It is with a great deal of urgency that we ask the US Department of Transportation to give immediate attention to broadening the regulations that govern these trains and the transport of hazardous liquids."

###

Visit us: <http://www.rocklandgov.com/>
Like us on Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/rockleg>