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March 6, 2018

The Honorable Ronald Batory  
Administrator  
Federal Railroad Administration  
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE  
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Administrator Batory,

Thank you for your work on the Federal Railroad Administration's (FRA) mission to keep our nation's railroad system safe and efficient. Long Island Rail Road's freight operator, New York & Atlantic Railway (NYAR), has recently been accused of allowing unqualified workers to perform dangerous track work. FRA released a report in 2016 about unsafe work practices by NYAR, and in light of these new allegations, I urge you to expeditiously review NYAR's current safety procedures.

In February, a group of day laborers filed a lawsuit against NYAR, claiming they were tasked with carrying out dangerous jobs without adequate training, certification or safety equipment. Working along the Long Island Rail Road (LIRR)—the nation's busiest commuter rail carrying approximately 301,000 customers each weekday—these workers claim they were not prepared to fix track switches, repair rails, or lift derailed freight trains back onto the rails.

These allegations are concerning and it is critical that FRA again review NYAR's workplace conditions to ensure lessons were learned after the 2016 report. Employees must be confident that they will only be asked to do work for which they are trained so they do not put their health and safety at risk. Commuters must be confident that the tracks their trains use every day are safe.

Thank you for your attention to this matter, and I look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

Kathleen M. Rice  
Member of Congress

