



ERIE COUNTY LEGISLATURE

HON. FRANK J. TODARO

LEGISLATOR
8TH DISTRICT

March 11, 2021

Neville Wilson
Assistant General Manager of Network Operational Center
Norfolk Southern
Box #172
1200 Peachtree Street, NE
Atlanta, GA 30309

Dear Mr. Wilson,

My office has been in contact with the Keystone Division of Norfolk Southern regarding numerous trains blocking Exchange Street and other railroad crossings in the Town of Alden, New York.

I'm aware the Town of Alden crossing is a waiting location for trains going from Buffalo to the Binghamton/Corning area. East and west bound trains cannot travel simultaneously through the area, thus a westbound train must wait for an opposing train to clear the tracks before an opposing train may proceed. Unfortunately a stopped train blocks Town of Alden crossings on a near daily occurrence for hours, which causes significant congestion in the middle of the day, primarily between 9 am to 5 pm. This is extremely disruptive to the local residents and businesses.

There are several crossings affected by the stopped trains, including Exchange Street (USDOT 264544C), County Line Road (USDOT 264541G), Sandridge Road (USDOT 264546R), Savage Road (USDOT 264543V), and Sullivan Road (USDOT 264542N).

When the Town of Alden railroad crossings are blocked by a stopped train, motorists have to drive up to over seven miles, and more than ten minutes, to get around the obstruction. For local families, residents and businesses this is extremely inconvenient, and if –when– there is an emergency situation where police, fire or medical personnel need to respond and multiple roads are blocked, access to clear roadways is a matter of public safety.

When a train was stopped blocking several crossings for over 8 hours on Monday, March 8, 2021, I toured the area myself. On Exchange Street, I witnessed school children walking home from the Middle School, just a half mile away, have to move between train cars to get across the

tracks. The nonviable alternative was to walk around the very long train in cold weather. Later, I saw an ambulance have to turn around and take an alternate route and other utility vehicles unable to get through. US Postal service carriers as well, must alter their route if a train is blocking the street. The Whistle Stop Inn restaurant is just one of the many businesses adversely affected by the blocked road, which is adjacent to the Exchange Street crossing.

Please contact me at 716-681-2071 or Frank.Todaro@erie.gov to discuss concerns of the residents, town and village officials, and a remedy to this situation. A meeting with representatives of Norfolk Southern needs to take place as soon as possible to address this issue. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,



Frank J. Todaro
Erie County Legislator, 8th District

Cc: Representative Christopher Jacobs
Senator Charles Schumer
Senator Kirsten Gillibrand