

January 5, 2026

Governor Philip D. Murphy
Office of the Governor
PO Box 001
Trenton, NJ 08625

Dear Governor Philip D. Murphy,

On behalf of the undersigned organizations representing New Jersey's business community, we respectfully urge you to veto—or decline to sign into law—Senate Bill No. 3389. While we share the goal of ensuring the highest levels of rail safety, this legislation would impose unnecessary, duplicative, and potentially harmful requirements on the railroad freight industry, with serious consequences for commerce, safety, and New Jersey's economy.

Rail safety is critically important, and we welcome thoughtful engagement on this issue. Unfortunately, Senate Bill No. 3389 would undermine—not enhance—safety by imposing arbitrary mandates that fail to reflect modern railroad operations and technological advancements. Provisions such as rigid train-length limitations and mandated crew sizes would significantly increase operational costs and require trains to be broken up at New Jersey's borders. These disruptions would heighten safety risks, delay freight movement, and impair supply chains that are essential to New Jersey's economy, including those supporting energy production, chemical manufacturing, agriculture, and consumer goods. Ultimately, these costs would be passed on to businesses and communities across the state.

The bill also introduces duplicative and conflicting requirements related to wayside detectors and hazardous materials reporting, adding layers of bureaucracy without improving safety outcomes. Many of these matters are already governed by comprehensive federal regulations and are subject to federal preemption. As a result, Senate Bill No. 3389 would create regulatory uncertainty, invite legal challenges, and complicate compliance efforts. In addition, the bill's labor-related provisions risk generating confusion rather than clarity in safety oversight and enforcement.

These concerns are particularly significant given New Jersey's role as a national logistics hub. The Port of New York and New Jersey is the largest port on the East Coast and among the busiest in the nation. The railroad freight network is a critical component of the port's success and the broader logistics ecosystem that underpins New Jersey's economy. Logistics—including freight movement by sea, rail, truck, and air—supports more than 400,000 direct jobs in the state, accounts for approximately 12 percent of the private-sector workforce, and contributes roughly \$62.5 billion, or about 10 percent, to New Jersey's GDP. It is also one of the state's fastest-growing sectors and provides relatively high average wages. Unnecessary regulation of railroads threatens this economic engine and disrupts regional and national supply chains.

In addition to its economic consequences, Senate Bill No. 3389 would run counter to New Jersey's environmental and climate objectives. Moving a given volume of freight in fewer, longer trains requires less fuel and results in lower greenhouse gas emissions. Because emissions are directly

tied to fuel consumption, capping train length would increase emissions rather than reduce them, undermining the state's clean energy and climate goals.

Under the current federal regulatory framework, railroads have made substantial safety progress. Since 2000, mainline accident rates have declined by nearly 50 percent, and hazardous materials incidents have dropped by 78 percent. Senate Bill No. 3389 does not build on these gains. Instead, it imposes redundant and counterproductive mandates that would complicate operations, risk worker safety, disrupt commerce, and weaken New Jersey's competitiveness.

For these reasons, we respectfully urge you to veto Senate Bill No. 3389 and to work with stakeholders on policies that genuinely enhance safety while preserving New Jersey's economic strength and leadership in logistics.

Respectfully,

Chemistry Council of New Jersey
New Jersey Business & Industry Association
New Jersey State Chamber of Commerce