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United States Senate

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March 12, 2015

The Honorable Shaun Donovan
Director
The Office of Management and Budget
725 17th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20503

Dear Director Donovan,

I write to strongly urge the Office of Management and Budget Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs (OIRA) to quickly finalize the Department of Transportation Pipelines and Hazardous Materials Administration proposed rule on the transportation of crude oil by rail. While I understand this is a complicated rule that we absolutely must get right, it must be finalized as soon as possible to ensure safety for North Dakota's communities.

North Dakota has experienced first-hand the effects of a crude oil train derailment and explosion. In December 2013, a train carrying crude oil derailed outside of Casselton, ND, and exploded. We were lucky no one was hurt and that the incident did not occur in a more populated area, but we cannot depend on luck. This incident and the recent string of oil train derailments in West Virginia and Illinois and subsequent explosions have underscored the urgent need for this rule.

To ensure the safety of our communities, we must take an all-of-the-above approach to rail safety. This includes prevention, mitigation, and preparing our first responders to make sure they have the training and tools they need to respond in the event of an oil train derailment. I ask that OIRA prioritize finalizing a comprehensive rule as soon as possible to help address a critical part of our nation's crude-by-rail safety plan.

Sincerely,



Heidi Heitkamp
United States Senate

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