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**SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BOARD ORDERS CSXT TO PREVENT TRAINS FROM ENTERING
ELSDON LINE UNLESS TRACKS ARE CLEAR**

*City of Chicago, Village of Evergreen Park Took Legal Action in February for Blocking Grade Crossings
in Violation of Federal Mandate*

Chicago Mayor Rahm Emanuel and Alderman Matt O'Shea today announced that the Surface Transportation Board (STB) has ordered CSX Transportation, Inc. to not allow a train to enter the Elsdon Line on the City's south side unless the line is clear. This ruling is effective immediately, and is the result of legal action against CSX for repeatedly blocking at-grade crossings – the intersections of railway lines and roads – along the Elsdon railroad line in violation of federally imposed requirements.

The ruling also requires monthly reports for one year from CSXT that will detail the company's efforts to address malfunctioning gates, the number of at-grade crossing blockages that exceed 10 minutes, and situations where trains are not being cut to avoid blocking crossings and why. Earlier orders from the federal agency had required CSX to separate trains into more than one unit if they are sitting idle at a grade crossing to allow traffic to move through those crossings. In each monthly report, CSXT will also be required to provide the Board with an update on the progress it has made in establishing operating protocols with other carriers on lines the Elsdon Line crosses.

The ruling is a result of substantial work on the issue by Mayor Emanuel, Alderman O'Shea, State Representative Kelly Burke, State Representative Fran Hurley and State Senator Bill Cunningham.

“Ever since CSX secured the right to operate on this track, residents have told us that trains along the Elsdon Line routinely cause lengthy delays that not only inconvenience residents but threaten public safety by blocking access to area hospitals,” said Mayor Emanuel. “My administration has been working closely with Alderman O’Shea and other local elected officials to hold the railroad accountable for their repeated violations in order to bring relief to the local community.”

The City of Chicago and Village of Evergreen Park in February filed a petition with the STB, the federal agency that reviews proposed railroad mergers and resolves railroad rate and service disputes, in order to remedy the serious harmful effects created by CSX’s operations along the Elsdon Line. The petition sought a number of potential remedies, including: the imposition of sanctions, including fines; continued monitoring; and additional auditing.

"I am pleased that the Surface Transportation Board is hold CSX accountable and granting relief for residents in my ward. I hope that this ruling will finally force CSX to honor the promises it made to my community three years ago and address the many public safety and quality of life issues they have created," said Alderman O’Shea.

Residents have complained that CSX trains frequently block at-grade crossings for significant periods of time, including during rush hour, despite binding conditions imposed by the STB intended to avoid this occurrence. Blockages of the at-grade crossing along 95th Street in Evergreen Park present particular concern because they impede access to two major hospitals: Little Company of Mary and Advocate Christ Medical Center, which is one of the very few major trauma centers on the south side of Chicago.

"I am pleased that the STB intervened and is granting relief to our residents who deal with these problems on a very regular basis," said State Representative Hurley.

State Representative Burke noted that residents of Chicago, Evergreen Park and surrounding communities have had to deal with the delays and disruptions for over two years. "The delays are intolerable and I thank the City of Chicago and the Village of Evergreen Park for working together to fight CSX and get relief for our residents," said State Representative Burke.

"For too long, CSX has ignored their own promises to operate a safe and efficient rail line in our community," said State Senator Cunningham, who represents both Evergreen Park and Mount Greenwood. "The ruling demonstrates that Chicago and Evergreen Park will do everything possible to hold CSX accountable for their neglect."

In 2013, CSX acquired the rights to operate on the Elsdon Line, which traverses the far southwest side of Chicago, the Village of Evergreen Park and other area communities. As part of the STB’s authorization allowing CSX to acquire and exercise its operating rights, the STB created requirements that would alleviate the impact of grade crossing blockages. For example, the railroad is required to break trains into two parts when a blockage is expected to exceed ten minutes, and

the railroad is also required to submit quarterly reports to the STB to report on its compliance.

However, CSX has not been in compliance with these federal requirements. A legal review of CSX's quarterly reports indicates that the railroad has admitted that it has not fully complied with the 2013 requirements as a condition of its receiving approval to operate on this line. In fact, the railroad has cut only one train over the past three years.

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