

CHARLIE MELANCON
3RD DISTRICT, LOUISIANA



COMMITTEE ON ENERGY
AND COMMERCE
COMMITTEE ON
SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

Washington, DC 20515

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Chairman James L. Oberstar
Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure
2165 Rayburn House Office Building

Dear Chairman Oberstar,

I am writing today to request a technical change to the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU), Public Law 109-59. I am requesting increased funding flexibility be authorized for New Iberia Railroad Crossing Safety Improvements.

The City of New Iberia has a railroad track that divides the city and has twenty-three crossings within the city limits. New Iberia has experienced a significant number of automobile accidents and near misses because of the number of crossings. When a train is stopped on the tracks, it prohibits some of the residents from accessing the only two hospitals in the city. In SAFETEA-LU, High Priority Project No. 2703 provides \$1.6 million for "New Iberia Grade Separation." After consultation with the city, it has been determined that the project outlined in this legislation would not be achievable given the city's budget.

Because of both immediate and long-term traffic and safety concerns, the City of New Iberia would like flexibility to accomplish the following: 1.) Upgrading a high-way rail grade crossing through the installation of active signals and gates; 2.) Studying the feasibility and necessity of rail grade separation at the crossing or 3.) Providing continuous access for emergency vehicles across the Southern Pacific rail line.

I respectfully request that the language for High Priority Project No. 2703 be changed to:

"Upgrading Existing Rail Road Crossings with Installation of Active Signals and Gates and to Study the Feasibility and Necessity of Rail Grade Separation."

Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me or Chris DeBosier on my staff at (202) 225-4031.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Charlie Melancon".

Charlie Melancon
Member of Congress