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NEWS

U. S. SENATOR FOR KANSAS

FROM:

SENATE REPUBLICAN LEADER

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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## RAIL STRIKE

### KANSAS IMPACT, CONGRESSIONAL ROLE

IT'S NO SURPRISE THAT THE FIRST DOMINO HAS NOW FALLEN AND THAT WE ARE NOW FACING A NATIONAL SHUTDOWN OF THE NATION'S RAIL SYSTEM.

MY UNDERSTANDING OF THE SITUATION -- WHICH IS CONSTANTLY CHANGING -- IS AS FOLLOWS.

JUST AFTER MIDNIGHT LAST NIGHT, THE INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF MACHINISTS STRUCK CSX TRANSPORTATION, ONE OF THE LARGEST FREIGHT RAILROADS ON THE EAST COAST.

AS WE ALL KNOW, A STRIKE AGAINST ONE RAILROAD AFFECTS ALL OF THE OTHER CARRIERS. RAIL LINES INTERCONNECT, ARE SHARED BY THE CARRIERS, AND SAFETY MUST BE ENSURED.

THE AMERICAN RAILROADS ASSOCIATION HAS SAID THAT MAJOR FREIGHT RAILROADS BEGAN CLEARING THEIR LINES EARLY THIS MORNING AND THAT BY EARLY AFTERNOON, CONRAIL, UNION PACIFIC, CHICAGO & NORTHWESTERN, NORFOLK SOUTHERN, BURLINGTON NORTHERN, SANTA FE AND SOUTHERN PACIFIC WILL ALL HAVE CEASED OPERATIONS.

#### KANSAS IMPACT

IN MY STATE OF KANSAS, JUST TO GIVE ONE EXAMPLE, BEACHNER GRAIN WHICH OPERATES GRAIN ELEVATORS IN TEN SOUTHEAST KANSAS COUNTIES, HAS SIX OUT OF FIFTEEN ELEVATORS SHUTDOWN THIS MORNING BECAUSE OF THE STRIKE. THIS SITUATION IS BEING REPEATED ALL OVER MY STATE, AND I SUSPECT EVERY OTHER MEMBER'S STATE IN ONE FORM OR ANOTHER. IT WILL ONLY GET WORSE AS TIME MARCHES ON.

I HAD HOPED THAT BY OFFERING MY AMENDMENT YESTERDAY URGING THAT CONGRESS TAKE ACTION TO FORESTALL A RAIL STRIKE BECAUSE OF ITS DEVASTATING IMPACT ON THE COUNTRY, THAT WE COULD HAVE AVOIDED WHAT HAS NOW HAPPENED.

#### 39 SENATORS VOTED NO - WHY?

I AM GLAD THAT THIS AMENDMENT PASSED, ALTHOUGH I WAS SURPRISED THAT 39 SENATORS VOTED AGAINST IT. I WOULD HOPE THAT THEY DO NOT SUPPORT THE SHUTDOWN THAT IS OCCURRING AND THE HAVOC THIS SITUATION IS STARTING TO WREAK ON THE ECONOMY. THERE ARE MILLIONS OF AMERICAN WORKERS WHO DEPEND ON RAIL SERVICE AS THEIR ONLY WAY TO GET TO THEIR JOBS OR WHOSE JOBS DEPEND ON PRODUCTS AND SUPPLIES TRANSPORTED BY RAIL.

I AM TOLD THAT IF THE RAIL SHUTDOWN CONTINUES, THERE WILL BE AT LEAST 180,000 LAYOFFS WITHIN THREE DAYS. FOR THIS SENATOR, THAT IS UNACCEPTABLE.

THIS MORNING, THE DISTINGUISHED CHAIRMAN OF THE HOUSE ENERGY AND COMMERCE COMMITTEE IS HOLDING HEARINGS AND I UNDERSTAND THAT TRANSPORTATION SECRETARY CARD AND UNION AND INDUSTRY REPRESENTATIVES WILL BE TESTIFYING. I COMMEND THE EFFORTS OF CHAIRMAN DINGELL AND THE ADMINISTRATION AND WOULD HOPE THAT THESE EFFORTS WILL LEAD TO A QUICK RESOLUTION. FOR THOSE UNIONS AND RAIL NEGOTIATORS WHO HAVE OPTED NOT TO STRIKE IN HOPES OF REACHING A SETTLEMENT SHORTLY, I COMMEND THEIR EFFORTS AS WELL.

#### CONGRESS STILL HAS ROLE

I CAN NOT EMPHASIZE ENOUGH THAT IT IS IMPORTANT THAT WE ALL WORK TOGETHER TO QUICKLY RESOLVE THIS SITUATION. WE DID IT LAST YEAR WHEN WE WERE DEALING WITH CONTRACT DISPUTES INVOLVING ABOUT 95 PERCENT OF THE RAIL WORKFORCE.

IN THE EVENT THAT CONTRACT SETTLEMENTS ARE NOT REACHED VERY SHORTLY -- WHICH I HOPE VERY MUCH THEY ARE TO AVOID CONGRESSIONAL INTERVENTION -- THERE IS NO REASON THAT CONGRESS CAN NOT EFFECTIVELY DEAL WITH THE SITUATION WITH RESPECT TO THE REMAINING FIVE PERCENT.

THE AMERICAN PEOPLE ARE COUNTING ON US.

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