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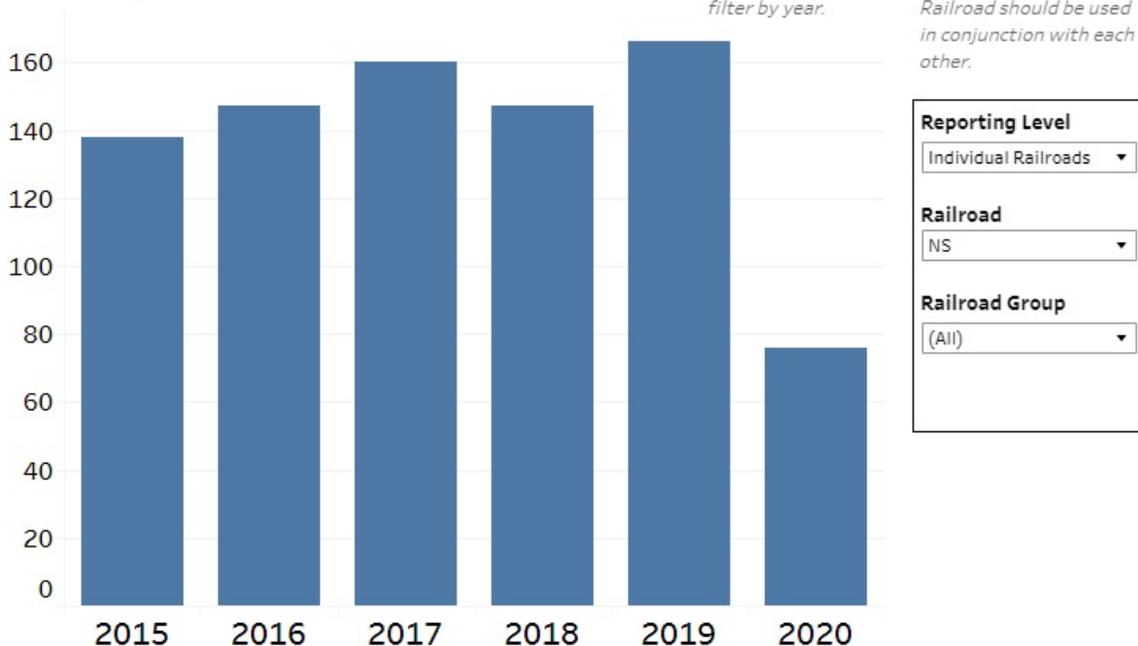
- ✓ PUC Secretary Rosemary Chiavetta rchiavetta@pa.gov
- ✓ PUC Transportation Division Manager Rodney Bender rodbender@pa.gov
- ✓ FRA Administrator Ronald Batory ronald.batory@dot.gov
- ✓ FRA Associate Administrator for Railroad Policy and Development Paul Nissenbaum, paul.nissenbaum@dot.gov
- ✓ FRA Safety Management Team 3 – Norfolk Southern rrswebinquiries@dot.gov

Dear Secretary Chiavetta, Division Manager Bender, FRA Administrator Batory, FRA Associate Administrator Nissenbaum, and FRA Safety Team Manager:

The undersigned representatives are writing because the integrity of Norfolk Southern's rail and bridge infrastructure throughout Pittsburgh and Allegheny County is crucial to the safety of our residents, to the well-being of our region, and to the sanctity of our water supply.

According to reports filed by Norfolk Southern with the Federal Rail Administration, between 2015 and through September 2020, Norfolk Southern has documented a total of 834 accidents within Pennsylvania.

Accident/Incident Overview



In addition, there is a history of Norfolk Southern derailments that have resulted in Federal Railroad Administration and National Transportation Safety Board findings of “serious oversights” in its operations, inspections, and maintenance. For more details, see RP3’s email concerning the [August 2018 Southside derailment](#).

In connection with an 83-car derailment off of the Beaver River Bridge in New Brighton, PA the NTSB found an “inadequate rail inspection and maintenance program that resulted in a rail fracture from an undetected internal defect.” The report also determined that a contributing cause was the “Federal Railroad Administration’s inadequate oversight of the internal rail inspection process and its insufficient requirements for internal rail inspection.” For more details, see [RP3's email](#).

Notwithstanding the New Brighton and Southside derailments, railroads are allowed to continue to self-regulate how far down they can wear their rails. Meanwhile, allowable individual rail car weight has increased from 263,000 to 284,000 pounds. Heavier cars and the

fact that train length is doubling make track wear and failure more likely—and this regularly compromises our safety, especially at rail bridges which are the most vulnerable point on a route. Norfolk Southern has a long history of paying [multi-million dollar fines to the EPA](#) for environmental violations caused by derailments spilling hazardous materials into our Western Pennsylvania rivers.

Moreover, since those safety alerts were compiled, it has now come to our attention that between October 20, 2020 and December 2, 2020, Norfolk Southern has had eight other significant derailments within its system, two of which were off of collapsed corroded bridges -- in [Clymer, Pennsylvania](#) and [Roanoke, Virginia](#)].

Taking into account especially the [layoffs of inspectors and maintenance personnel](#) that has occurred within the Norfolk Southern system since 2019, and the fact that highly volatile Liquid Natural Gas under pressure will soon be transported through our most densely populated neighborhoods, we feel that it is necessary and prudent to obtain your focus and engagement on corroded rail bridges in Western Pennsylvania.

In order to prevent catastrophic derailments in the future, we the undersigned hereby request that additional rail safety inspection oversight be implemented and performed by both the Pennsylvania Utility Commission and the Federal Rail Administration.

Very truly yours