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Grace Meng
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September 28, 2016

The Honorable Polly Trottenberg
Commissioner
NYC Department of Transportation
55 Water Street, 9th Floor
New York, NY 10041

Dear Commissioner Trottenberg:

I write to request full and speedy compliance with every "City Responsibility" outlined in Appendix A of the Federal Railroad Administration's (FRA) September 23, 2016, Focused Safety Review of the New York & Atlantic Railway (NYA).

As you know, FRA's review of NYA operating and management practices was conducted in response to the July 8, 2015 collision of an NYA train and a tractor-trailer at the Maspeth Avenue highway-rail grade crossing in Queens. The resulting fire destroyed the tractor, severely damaged the trailer, and injured the truck driver. In response to concerns that similar collisions may occur in the future, I requested an FRA review. In response to the recently published report, I am writing each entity to which the FRA made a recommendation.

Respectfully, I request notification when each of the city responsibilities listed in Appendix A (and copied on the following page for your convenience) has been completed. If you disagree with any of the FRA findings or recommendations, please do not hesitate to contact me. We are fortunate that more accidents have not occurred at grade crossings, but every day that lingers without these crucial safety improvements is another day where lives are at risk. I look forward to working with you to ensure the safety of all New Yorkers, and to ensure that an incident such as the July 8, 2015 NYA collision never occurs again.

Sincerely,


Grace Meng
Member of Congress

**FRA FINDINGS AND CITY RESPONSIBILITIES CONTAINED IN APPENDIX A
OF SEPTEMBER 23, 2016 FOCUSED SAFETY REVIEW OF NYA RAILWAY**

Maspeth Avenue – Dot # 338015C

- Missing advance warning sign, pavement markings faded, stop bar missing. The Diagnostic team noted that where Maspeth Avenue crosses Rust Street there is a stop line, but since the vehicles on Maspeth Avenue have the right of way, this stop line should be removed.
- The Diagnostic Team recommends a traffic light, equipped with preemption to the grade crossing, be installed to control the intersection of Maspeth Avenue and Rust Street, and second traffic light equipped with preemption on the approach to the yard tracks on the south side of the grade crossing.
- This is Justified by the high volume of car and truck traffic in the area, and it will also better prevent the traffic from making illegal right and left hand turns at the grade crossing (currently “No Turn” signs are posted at the grade crossing).

73rd Street – DOT # 338016J

- Advanced warning sign missing, pavement markings faded, stop bars missing.
- Highway requires paving on north side.
- Remove stop sign on the north side of crossing. It should not be posted at a public grade crossing with active warning devices.

88th Street – DOT # 338017R

- Vegetation from private property growing over sidewalk blocking site distance to pedestrian crossing gate.

Greenpoint Avenue – DOT # 338010T

- Advance warning sign missing; pavement markings fading.
- Northbound highway may need paving soon.
- Westbound markings to Railroad Avenue poor.

Washington Avenue (43rd Street) – DOT # 338013N

- Review need for advance warning signs.
- Pavement markings and stop lines faded.
- Highway requires patching.
- Add no parking signs on west side to prevent trucks from blocking warning devices.
- Crossing surface should be extended to accommodate the sidewalk.

Debevoise Avenue (49th Street) – DOT # 338014V

- Replace advance warning signs; install pavement markings and stop lines.
- Highway needs repair.
- Lower advance warning sign on the west side.

Laurel Hill – DOT # 338012G

- Pavement markings and stop lines faded and should be renewed.