



TENNESSEE FARM BUREAU FEDERATION

November 3, 2025

Governor Bill Lee
Office of the Governor
State Capitol
Nashville, TN 37243

Dear Governor Lee,

Please accept this letter from the Tennessee Farm Bureau Federation in support of Tennessee short line railroads and the need for state investment into short line rail infrastructure to ensure continued prosperity of rural Tennessee. Agriculture must have quality access to good roads, water, and rail transportation to move commodities and supplies. We support funding and upgrading of the state's short line railroads.

Your leadership, combined with the General Assembly's one-time allocation in the FY2021 budget of the Short Line Railroad program, has been instrumental in advancing infrastructure improvements across the state. This allocation has empowered short line rails to implement targeted upgrades which have significantly enhanced reliability and operational efficiency. The funding has been transformative, but without a stable and predictable funding stream, the short line rail system will face mounting challenges in planning necessary maintenance and ensuring the long-term resilience of our state's rail infrastructure. Farm Bureau supports the effort to provide additional funding to continue these critical enhancements to further rail infrastructure in Tennessee.

Short line railroads are an essential first component for moving agricultural commodities from their rural production base to the world market. Agriculture products are the third largest beneficiary of railroads by quantity in Tennessee. Short line railroads provide a safe, efficient transportation option for large quantities of bulk commodities at a reasonable expense to the farmer. They also service some of our distressed and at-risk communities.

With the current commodity markets and trade uncertainty, your attention and interest in agriculture and rural Tennessee is more crucial than ever. As always, thank you for your dedication and commitment to agriculture and rural Tennessee.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Eric Mayberry".

Eric Mayberry
President
Tennessee Farm Bureau Federation