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Remarks for
Raymond Louie
President
Federation of Canadian Municipalities
For
Rail Safety Working Group
Press Conference
3:00 p.m.
Thursday, April 28, 2016

Delta Hotel

Ottawa

Good afternoon.

Thank you Minister for taking the time to meet with FCM's Rail Safety Working Group this afternoon. We appreciate your commitment to working with us to move forward on improving emergency planning and rail safety in our communities, and for the people who live there.

I would like to acknowledge the hard work of our Rail Safety Working Group under the co-leadership of Janelle Saskiw, the Mayor of Marwayne Alberta, and Pauline Quinlan, the Mayor of Bromont Quebec. The Working Group was established after the tragic derailment that devastated the community of Lac Mégantic in 2013.

Our work is guided by three priority areas:

- To equip and support municipal first responders to rail emergencies,
- To ensure that federal and industry policies and regulations address the rail safety concerns of municipalities, and
- To prevent the downloading of rail safety emergency costs to local taxpayers.

Minister, we welcome your announcement today on Protective Direction 36. The enhancements made to information sharing respond to what FCM has been calling for. This more detailed information will enable our first responders to be better prepared and equipped to coordinate effective responses to rail incidents involving dangerous goods within their communities. It also means that our residents will now be better informed about what is being transported in their neighbourhood.

We are also pleased with the initiative to provide additional information about railway crossings in communities – something that responds directly to concerns raised by FCM. We agree that any information that Transport Canada has about grade crossings should be made available to municipalities and also railways. Our member municipalities need this improved information in

order to plan how best to address issues related to crossing safety in their community. And we look forward to a strong partnership with the federal government in investing in safety upgrades at crossings.

Minister, we thank you for taking the time to meet with us and for the initiatives that you announced today – this underscores the importance of the unprecedented level of collaboration and partnership between FCM and Transport Canada in developing new measures for rail safety.

Minister Garneau, we look forward to continuing to work with you and your Department, to ensure that the concerns of municipalities and our residents are taken into account in the development of new measures that will enhance rail safety, transparency and improve emergency preparedness in our communities.

Thank you.