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## **CSX Tunnel has "Decades" of Life, Per Federal Report *Question to be Explored at Council Hearing on Tuesday***

One of the key arguments made by CSX for immediate approval of its plan to rebuild and greatly expand the Virginia Avenue Tunnel freight tunnel is undercut by the Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). The EIS, issued in June by the Federal Highway Administration/U.S. Department of Transportation and the District Department of Transportation, says that "despite the signs of distress...the *tunnel is in no danger of collapsing* [although] a major structural deficiency could materialize *over the next few decades*," page 2-5, (emphasis added).

The EIS directly contradicts CSX's contention that the proposal should be rushed through the approval process because tunnel is on the verge of failure or collapse. For instance, Steve Flippin, director of federal affairs for CSX told the *Washington Post* on February 2, 2014: "This is a tunnel that is near the end of its useful life. We are having to maintain it more and more and more often, which means it is getting closer to failure and that's not anything that we want, and it's nothing that the community wants. At some point this tunnel has to be replaced." CSX has made similar statements before the City Council and elsewhere.

The condition of the tunnel and other questions will be the subject of an unusual DC Council hearing on Tuesday, August 26<sup>th</sup>. The hearing will be jointly chaired by Chairman Phil Mendelson and Councilmember Mary Cheh, chair of the Transportation and Environment Committee.

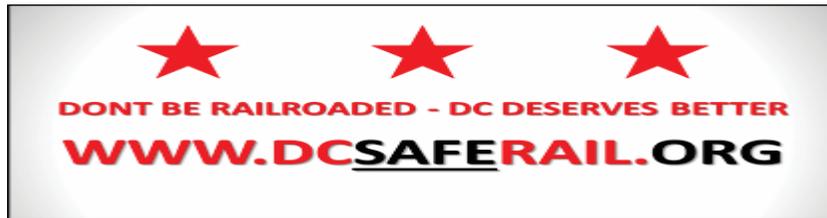
### **DCSafeRail Media Availability at 8/26 DC Council Hearing**

Members of DCSafeRail will be available to the media before and during the August 26 hearing on the CSX expansion.

- What: DCSafeRail members available to the media at CSX hearing
- Where: Outside DC Council Chamber, 1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
- When: Tuesday, 11:30 a.m. until the end of the hearing (*the hearing begins at 12:00pm.*)

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*DCSR is a coalition of citizens, organizations, and elected officials asking for accountability and oversight in ensuring the community's health, safety, and security in the Virginia Avenue Tunnel expansion project.*



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