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The Honorable Phylicia Porter
100 Holliday Street
Room 527
Baltimore, MD 21202

Dear Councilwoman Porter:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this letter of information to the Baltimore City Council regarding the December 30, 2021, incident at the CSX Curtis Bay Coal Piers.

The Curtis Bay facility has played a critical role in Baltimore, and across the globe, over its 140 year history. The facility has direct barge service to two Maryland power plants that provide power to the Baltimore metropolitan electricity grid. These plants maintain limited on-site coal storage and rely heavily on the Coal Piers to provide timely delivery to generate adequate power for the region, especially during Baltimore's hot summers and cold winters. Internationally, the facility helps provide Europe with a reliable alternative to Russian coal.

The Coal Piers are also vital to the continued success of the Port of Baltimore. The Port generates nearly \$3.3 billion in total personal income annually and supports 15,330 direct jobs and 139,180 jobs connected to Port work. Baltimore's 50-foot waterway channel is a competitive advantage that has led to record-setting cargo volumes at the Port. Maryland relies on federal dredging dollars to keep shipping lanes open. Dollars that are allocated based on a port's annual cargo tonnage. Coal is Baltimore's top exported commodity (based on tonnage) and accounts for over half of the tonnage used in federal dredging dollars calculations. Without the Coal Piers, the Port of Baltimore could lose vital federal funding that supports so many good paying jobs in the City. Bringing the coal piers back to full capacity – in a safe and environmentally sound manner – is not only critical for the community but is important for the economic well-being of the City of Baltimore and supporting American interests abroad.

While a root cause investigation of the incident is still underway, CSX provides the below update to the City Council, with updates to the Council and community to follow.

CSX is working closely with federal and state regulators to:

- Thoroughly investigate the incident and take necessary corrective actions
- Provide a forensic evaluation to determine the cause
- Provide information on the air quality impact of the incident
- Provide active air monitoring while the investigation is ongoing
- Pursuing new air flow and design modernization options
- Reviewing the facilities Fugitive Dust Plan and training to include preventive measures.

Incident Description and Initial Response: On December 30, 2021, at 11:24:08 a.m. an explosion occurred at the CSX Curtis Bay Piers while normal coal loading operations were being performed on the northern side of the site. No injuries occurred. The Baltimore City Fire Department (BCFD)¹ was notified of the incident at 11:25 a.m. Upon arrival, BCFD established on-site incident command. The first update to elected leadership representing the Curtis Bay community took place at 12:14 p.m. By late afternoon the site was deemed safe by BCFD. On December 31, 2022, CSX conducted door-to-door canvassing of homes and businesses in the immediate area to assess damage and establish contact with property owners.

Incident Investigations: An extensive forensic evaluation to determine the cause of the explosion is underway and anticipated to be complete by July 2022. CSX engaged experts in fire and explosion investigations to provide additional technical resources to support the investigation and that the safe resumption of operations. Additionally, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) is conducting a separate investigation. Findings are expected soon.

Air Quality Impact and Public Safety Mitigation Measures: Onsite visible evidence indicates a majority of particulate matter released remained onsite. CSX is working with industry experts, Maryland Department of the Environment, Curtis Bay community, and other interested parties to identify appropriate longer-term air monitoring around the site. While the investigations continue, CSX has increased the flow of fresh air and implemented active air monitoring of its temporary operations in the unaffected portion of the facility to identify any potential issues.

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We appreciate the patience of the Curtis Bay Community and the City Council as we finalize the root cause analysis. As additional updates become available CSX will provide timely updates to the City Council and Curtis Bay Community.

Very truly yours,



Brian W. Hammock

¹ CSX, BCFD, and Office of Emergency Management work closely together to plan for emergency response, including on the Local Emergency Planning Committee and the South Baltimore Industrial Mutual Aid Plan committee.