

Buttigieg calls on Trump to back reversing deregulation in wake of train derailment

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Transportation Secretary [Pete Buttigieg](#) on Thursday called on former President Trump to support the [Biden](#) administration in reversing Trump-era deregulations in the wake of the derailment of a train carrying hazardous chemicals in Ohio.

“One thing he can do is express support for reversing the deregulation that happened on his watch. I heard him say he had nothing to do with it, even though it was in his administration. So, if he had nothing to do with it and they did it in his administration against his will, maybe he can come out and say that he supports us moving in a different direction,” Buttigieg said during a visit to East Palestine.

The White House has blamed Republican lawmakers and the Trump administration for lax railway and environmental regulations in the aftermath of the derailment. The White House has pointed to [a 2021 letter from Republican senators](#) to the Federal Railroad Administration, urging the agency to expand the use of automated track inspection, and pointed to a Republican Study Committee

proposal to cut to government funding to address chemical spills.

Additionally, [Politico reported](#) that the Trump administration rolled back several safety measures for railways, including regular safety audits and an Obama-era rule that required faster brakes on trains carrying flammable materials.

“We’re not afraid to own our policies when it comes to raising the bar on regulation,” Buttigieg said on Thursday.

He further targeted Trump, saying the former president should back the Biden administration’s policies around the situation if he thinks the events in Ohio are something all Americans should care about.

“I’ve got to think that him indicating that this is something that everybody, no matter how much you disagree on politics and presidential campaigns, can get behind — higher fines, tougher regulations on safety, Congress untying our hands on breaking rules, all the other things that go with that — that would be a nice thing for him to do,” Buttigieg said.

Buttigieg [went to East Palestine](#) a day after former President Trump [visited the town](#) and as the Biden administration has faced criticism for not heading to eastern Ohio sooner. Trump, ahead of his visit, suggested that the town had been abandoned by the Biden administration.

The White House has not yet said if President Biden, who just returned from a trip to Ukraine and Poland, will visit.

The Transportation Department has defended the timing of the trip, saying it aligns with when the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) issued its initial findings from their investigators on

the ground.

The preliminary [report tentatively corroborated reports](#) that a wheel bearing severely overheated ahead of the accident. NTSB said investigators have examined the first car to derail, the 23rd overall, as well as local surveillance footage, which seemingly shows a wheel bearing in late-stage overheat failure immediately ahead of the accident.

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