

Submitter: Kenneth Cummings

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Joint Committee On Transportation

Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB723

I am in favor of legislation requiring two person train crews. As a railroad employee with almost 20 years experience, 14 years of that as a locomotive engineer, I can say having that second person in the locomotive cab is crucial to not only employee safety but the safety of the public, as well. With unpredictable call times and long hours spent working, there are times when one's mind is not as focused as it should be. Having another person there adds an extra set of eyes to look out for potential hazards on the tracks, to converse with to help fend off fatigue, and is available in the event of a medical emergency.

I can share an example of the benefit of having that second crew member in the locomotive cab. Three years ago, I was unfortunately involved in a train versus trespasser accident. After bringing my train to a stop the conductor got off and was able to quickly find the person who had been struck and render first aid until paramedics arrived. If it had only been myself in that cab I would have had to stop my train, secure the train to ensure no movement could happen when left unattended as per F.R.A. and Carrier's rules, a five to thirty minute task depending of the weight and location of the train, and only then would have I been able to go back and attempt to find that individual and render first aid. With the severity of most train strikes, minutes can be the difference between life and death.

All of the rail carriers operating in the state of Oregon promote safety as one of their top priorities. Having one man train crews directly contradicts this. Vote yes for two person train crew requirements.