

Submitter: Jason Gorham
On Behalf Of: Jason Gorham
Committee: Joint Committee On Transportation
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB723

To Whom It May Concern,

My name is Jason Gorham, and I'm a conductor with Union Pacific Railroad based in Klamath Falls, Oregon. I'm writing in strong support of SB723, the two-person crew bill. I'm out here on the rails every day, and I want to speak from personal experience about why this bill is not just important—it's critical to our safety and the safety of the public.

Running these trains is no small task. They're often over a mile long, carrying everything from consumer goods to hazardous materials. It's not something that can or should be handled alone. Two-person crews aren't just about efficiency—they're about being able to respond to the unexpected and to prevent serious incidents before they happen.

I can't count the number of times I've had to help keep an engineer awake during a long haul, especially on night runs. We're all human. Fatigue is real out here. Engineers may be operating on very little sleep, working unpredictable hours, and dealing with long stretches of isolation. As a conductor, I've caught signs of microsleeps or zoning out—and I've been able to step in, talk to them, keep them alert, and keep that train safely moving. Take me out of the cab, and who does that? Who notices when they're nodding off behind the throttle?

There have also been times when we've needed to secure a train quickly in an emergency—blocked crossings, broken equipment, even animals or people on the tracks. These are situations that require teamwork, quick communication, and often splitting up to take action in different parts of the train. One person simply can't be in two places at once.

We already run with bare-bones crews. Stripping it down to one person isn't innovation—it's gambling with lives. Not just ours as railroad workers, but the lives of everyone in the communities we roll through. When something goes wrong, and it will, it matters if there's someone else there to help respond.

Please support SB723 and make two-person crews a requirement in Oregon. It's a matter of common sense and public safety.

Thank you for your time and for listening to those of us who are out there doing the job.

Sincerely,
Jason Gorham
Conductor, Union Pacific Railroad
Klamath Falls, Oregon