

Co-Chairs & Esteemed members of Committee
~~Senators,~~

Please let me first thank you for the opportunity to speak to you about SB723 and why I feel this is important.

My Name is Edward Henry. I see I may be a little under dressed in relation to some. I do have a suit, but just one. But I wanted to stand before you representing who I am and what I represent. I am a Husband, Father, Grandfather, former Marine and a 21 year Railroad Conductor. I am your neighbor, your friend your family member and a member of your community. Born in this State and living side by side with you.

I have had many jobs and responsibilities in my adult life. As a Marine, a 14 year Manufacturing Operator, Technician and Mechanic and as a 21 year Class 1 Railroad Conductor. Every adventure I have experienced has had it's own inherent dangers and Safety Concerns. In every instance and every environment safety was, and is, my greatest concern and focus.

Railroad Safety isn't just my concern. It is, and should be, the concern of every member of our community.

As Railroaders, fatigue is an every day reality. Trains all over the State and Country are staffed by men and women that are on call 24 hours a day, 7 days a week for 365 days a year. These are NOT our Grandfathers or Great Grandfathers railroads. Trains seldom run on a schedule. Because of this, train crews are subject to call all hours of the day and night.

Coffee and Energy Drinks can only help us so much. Having that other crew member in the cab helps us stay alert and focused. That second set of eyes on whats ahead of us. A person or vehicle on the tracks, Trees, mud and rock slides. A speed restriction we have to slow down for or maintenance crews working on or near our tracks. Dangers around every corner that only alert and attentive crew members can react to properly.

Having that second crew member is a safety blanket. Not only do we keep each other awake and alert, we monitor each other. We never know when one of us may have a medical emergency. We are first responders for each other and to the public in cases of an incident. Without a second crew member, if one of us were to have a medical emergency there would be no one to provide life saving care. I take trains from Eugene to Klamath Falls. The vast majority of this territory is through the Cascade Mountain range away from populated areas and the easy access to emergency response professionals. I am their and they are my first responder.

In the case of an incident, like struck pedestrian or car, there would be no one on the train able to go back and render aid to an injured person. I have been that first responder. In that situation I witnessed a pedestrian struck by another train I was waiting for. Badly injured, unresponsive but still breathing. I provided care and comfort until emergency crews arrived. A one man crew would not have been able to do this. There are numerous instances like this across the country.

There is an old saying that is as true today as it ever has been. "Two Heads are better than one". A second set of eyes to verify proper and safe train makeup, To review and understand our track authority, slow orders and special site specific restrictions. Making sure our trains, that are carrying some of the deadliest chemicals, safely make it to their destinations while ensuring the safety of our communities.

Having 2 crew members on every train makes this more likely and makes it safer for our neighbors, our friends our family members and our entire community.

For these, and so many other reasons, I ask that you support SB723 and pass it on for a Senate Vote.

Thank you for your time and your Consideration.