

Submitter: Steven Baldwin
On Behalf Of: BLET 362
Committee: Joint Committee On Transportation
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB723

Good evening,

Thank you Co-Chair Gorsek and Co-Chair McLain and Co-Vice Chairs Starr and Boshart-Davis and other distinguished members of the Transportation Committee.

Tonight, we're here to discuss WHY we need 2 people in the cab of a locomotive. My name is Steve Baldwin, and I have been an employee of Union Pacific railroad for over 20 yrs, and an engineer for 19 of those years, I can tell you beyond any doubt that 2 people in the cab are crucial to the safety of the public and the individuals on the train. I run out of La Grande Oregon which is in the blue mountains of Eastern Oregon. Beautiful area, but extremely remote by rail. I travel over major mountains going west into Hermiston Oregon, as well as east to Nampa Idaho. In the winter, most of the area is snow ridden which blocks any vehicles from getting to the head end of the train. Now to put this in perspective, we're running 3-mile-long trains. Most of the access roads to even get to these trains are blocked by the train, so if help is needed, UP has to high rail to these trains to assist. That requires a special vehicle to literally get on the track and help. I am positive that police, fire and ambulance vehicles are not equipped to do this.

With that in mind, having two people in the cab WHEN, NOT IF, there is an emergency, that conductor or engineer becomes the "first responder" for medical needs. That second person just gave a better than 75% chance of survival than a 90% possible fatality rate for say a heart attack. That other person becomes the lifeline for an individual that was hit by a train (and this happens more than you think). That second person IMMEDIATELY secures a train that may be having mechanical issues (that issue is on the rise), and that second person provides a second set of eyes to help avoid potential strikes or hazards while on the train. The benefits of two people simply out way the benefits of not having them present.

Now, you're probably going to here terminology called "the alerter". This use to be called the dead man switch, WHY ?? because if you didn't push it, then you're probably dead. This "alerter" does have a function. If you don't push it, or can't, (and that's IF it works correctly), it's designed to stop the train. What it does NOT do is send an immediate message to the train dispatcher that this train is in distress, and they dispatch a manager to that train's location. This is simply NOT TRUE.

Put yourself in the seat of a locomotive. IF you're having a heart attack or ANY medical situation, the ONLY way to notify someone that you need help, is through radio communication. You have to be able to dial 911, then wait for the dispatcher to answer, then be able to communicate well enough to tell that dispatcher your

Locomotive number, train symbol, location AND what your needs are. Can you honestly say that doing all that while having a heart attack is feasible? I can say absolute not. This is simply about SAFETY. When we as railroad professionals go to work, one of the most important things is safety. Union Pacific preaches this daily and yet here we are, having to defend 2 people in the cab. In our safety reports or briefings is how do we “keep a safe work environment “. If we go to one person in the cab, that environment, that agreement, is now broken. Everyone has the right to be safe at work, EVERYONE... Please pass SB723

Thank you