

March 4, 2019

Joint Transportation Committee

HB 2970

Dear Co-Chairs and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for this opportunity to provide comments about **House Bill 2970**, which seeks to establish mandatory minimum crew size requirements for trains in Oregon. For the record, the Oregon Rail Users' League (ORULE) strongly opposes this measure and we urge you not to pass it.

As background, ORULE is an association comprised of public and private entities that recognize the numerous benefits of safe, efficient railroad infrastructure serving the state of Oregon. The benefits of a robust railroad network include the following: economic opportunity in communities around the state; reduced congestion and increased safety on the state's roads and highways; and improved air quality.

We oppose House Bill 2970 for the following reasons:

- **It could have a stifling impact on rail service in Oregon.** Few states have enacted measures to establish minimum crew sizes, and those that have are not currently enforcing these laws. By passing this measure, lawmakers would put Oregon on a regulatory island that all railroads and companies who rely on them would need to reconfigure current policies and procedures in order to serve. This would undoubtedly affect service, efficiency, and cost. For short line railroads, the impacts could be even more profound as crew size mandates could undermine existing practices necessary to provide safe, efficient, and economical service to local customers.
- **The federal government occupies this space.** Through numerous acts and actions, the federal government has established preemption on the issue of crew size.

Given these facts, we respectfully urge you to oppose House Bill 2970.

Thank you for your consideration.

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