



3/4/19

To: Co-Chairs Rep. McKeown and Sen. Beyer, Co-Vice Chairs Sen. Boquist, Rep. Noble
Members of the Joint Committee on Transportation

From: Albany & Eastern Railroad

Re: AERC opposition to HB2970

My name is Ginny Wood, and I am Director of Operations for Albany and Eastern Railroad, a privately-owned short line railroad based in Lebanon. The AERC serves the manufacturing, agricultural and wood products industries in Lebanon, Sweet Home, Albany, Crabtree, Lyons, Mill City and soon, Corvallis.

The safety of our team and that of the communities we operate in and near is a top priority. Daily crew safety briefings and communication protocols help us ensure nothing moves on our tracks unless its safe to do so.

In the 11 years that the AERC has been under current ownership, there have been no incidents related to engineer, operator or crew size. Approximately 90% of the trains we run are two-crew trains, as necessitated by our own internal safety requirements, load/car switching requirements and accepted industry guidelines. The 10% of our trains that are run as single-crew trains are either, A) remote operated locomotives in the case of switching/yard connections, or B) simple, straightforward runs with minimal switching/siding requirements or car count. On these trains, all functions necessary for locomotive operation and transport are safely performed by one engineer from the locomotive, or via remote control on the ground.

This legislation to require an additional crew member on these runs would add an estimated \$40,000-\$70,000 in annual expense and provide no additional value for the railroad or the customer. AERC operations are lean and need to remain so in order to be a competitive shipping solution for our rural area and its industries.

While we remain committed and open to any practical conversation about rail safety, we ask that you oppose this legislation as introduced.

Respectfully,

Ginny Wood
Operations Director, AERC