

Submitter: Jodi Wallace
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Joint Committee On Transportation
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB723

From: Jodi Wallace, National Secretary - Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineer & Trainman Auxiliary
Re: Written Testimony in support of Oregon Rail Safety Bill SB 723

Thank you for allowing me to submit my written testimony in support of .SB No 723 the Oregon Rail Safety Bill.

I am writing to express my strong support for Senate Bill 723, which mandates a two-person crew on trains operating in Oregon. This bill is essential for both worker safety and the protection of the communities through which these trains travel.

As the wife of a railroad engineer with 21 years of experience, I have witnessed firsthand the critical importance of having two crew members in the cab. Over the years, my husband has seen colleagues suffer medical emergencies while on duty. In multiple cases, had there not been a second person present, the outcomes could have been fatal. Thanks to having a second crew member, emergency assistance was called in time, allowing these workers to receive the medical care they needed and survive.

Railroading is one of the few professions where I say a prayer every time my husband leaves for work, hoping he arrives safely at his next destination. Long and unpredictable schedules can lead to fatigue, making the presence of a second crew member vital. That extra set of eyes and hands can mean the difference between safety and disaster.

Beyond worker safety, this bill is crucial for public safety. As a resident of a community with multiple trains passing through daily, I want reassurance that in the event of an accident, at least one crew member can leave the train to assess damage, check for hazardous leaks, or assist anyone who may be injured. A single crew member simply cannot manage these critical responsibilities alone.

For the well-being of our railroaders and the safety of our communities, I urge you to support Senate Bill 723 and ensure that two-person crews remain a requirement for trains in Oregon.

On behalf of myself, my family and the members of the BLET Auxiliary that I represent across this nation, please do not put the lives of the people, your constituents in the State of Oregon in jeopardy.

Two people on the engine of every locomotive across this county should not be a question of if it's necessary... it should be demanded for the safety of all of us.