



April 8th 2025

The Honorable Senator Chris Gorsek
The Honorable Representative Susan McLain
Co-Chairs of the Joint Committee on Transportation
Distinguished Members of the Committee
Oregon State Capitol
900 Court Street NE,
Salem, Oregon 97301
Room: HR F

Re: **SB 723 Requires that trains have a minimum of two crew members.**

Dear Sen. Gorsek & Rep. McLain, and Members of the Committee:

The Sheet Metal Air Rail and Transportation Workers (SMART) is a proponent of SB 723

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in strong support of Senate Bill 723, which would require that trains operating in Oregon have a minimum of two crew members.

My name is Ty Dragoo, and I represent the SMART Transportation Division in the state of Kansas. Our union represents thousands of rail workers nationwide who have firsthand experience with the operations, safety challenges, and long-term implications of rail policy at both the state and national levels.

Kansas enacted a similar two-person crew law nearly two years ago. During the spring and summer of 2023, as our state was considering this legislation, we heard the same dire warnings from the rail industry that you may be hearing today. Railroad representatives told lawmakers in Kansas that requiring two-person crews would “no doubt increase costs” and force a “rethink” of the logistical planning of their national network. They said such a move would create inefficiencies and potentially lead to disinvestment in our state.

They also fought vehemently against the bill by claiming it was pre-empted by federal law and warned that Kansas would be sued immediately if it passed. But as of the writing of this testimony, no such lawsuit has been filed. Not one. If that tells you anything, it’s that sometimes threats are just that—threats, not grounded in reality or legal certainty. And yet, two years later, the railroads are not pulling out of Kansas—they’re expanding.





Just last week, Union Pacific and Jaguar Transport Holding LLC announced major investments in Kansas rail operations. According to a press release dated March 27, 2025, titled “*Union Pacific and Jaguar Transport Holding LLC Primed for Growth in Kansas.*” these companies are actively investing in infrastructure, logistics hubs, and workforce development within our state. Far from disinvesting, they’re doubling down.

This proves what we’ve known all along: public safety and rail investment are not mutually exclusive. In fact, a safer, more reliable rail network—built on common-sense safety rules like maintaining two qualified crew members in every cab—is *exactly* what strengthens public trust and private investment in the long run.

And let me offer this: in Kansas, much like Oregon, our state’s natural beauty and resources are held dear. Our underground aquifer and millions of acres of farmland feed and supply the world—just as your fisheries and timberlands sustain livelihoods and define Oregon’s identity. A derailment, a hazardous materials spill, or a delayed response to a track emergency isn’t just a safety failure—it’s a threat to the very soul of our states’ bountiful resources.

So this isn’t just about keeping workers and the public safe—it’s about protecting what makes Oregon and Kansas worth fighting for.

SB723 is not a burden; it is a minimum standard of responsibility. A two-person crew ensures there’s always a second set of trained eyes, hands, and judgment to handle what can—and does—go wrong on the rails.

Let Kansas be your proof. Two-person crew requirements *do not* stifle growth—they help ensure it’s done the right way.

On behalf of SMART-TD Kansas, I want to sincerely thank this committee for taking this issue seriously and for your leadership in prioritizing the safety of your citizens, your workers, and your environment. Oregon has long been a leader in transportation policy, and we’re proud to stand with you in supporting SB723.

Respectfully,

Ty E Drago

SMART-TD Kansas Legislative Director





News Releases

Union Pacific and Jaguar Transport Holding LLC Primed for Growth in Kansas City

New lease agreement supports regional business growth

OMAHA, NEB., MARCH 27, 2025

Union Pacific Railroad announced today it has entered into an agreement with Jaguar Transport Holdings LLC to provide short line rail service in the Central Industrial District in Kansas City, a move that will enhance customer service and support regional economic growth.

Union Pacific will lease about 12 acres of land and four miles of track in central Kansas City to Jaguar Transport, a leading transportation logistics company with experience in short line rail, warehousing and transload services.

“Jaguar has a proven track record of providing premier customer service and we believe this operating change will be a win for both railroads, our mutual customers and the local economy,” said Kenny Rocker, executive vice president – Marketing and Sales, for Union Pacific. “Both parties have high expectations for growth under this exciting new deal.”

The change allows Union Pacific to focus on fast, reliable long-haul service from the site in central Kansas City, while Jaguar will offer five-day-a-week short-haul services via its new short line railroad: the Kansas City West Bottoms Railroad.

“Our new business partnership with Union Pacific will create operational efficiencies and unique economic opportunities for the region, allowing local businesses in the greater Kansas City area faster and easier access to Union Pacific’s leading rail network,” said Tim Enayati, senior vice president of commercial development for Jaguar Transport Holdings. “We’re thrilled this opportunity is happening in Missouri and Kansas, two states that have been great partners and longtime supporters of the rail industry.”

In addition to its short-line services, Jaguar owns a cold and dry storage warehouse adjacent to the property and it is finalizing construction of a new transload facility on the site that will begin accepting train cars sometime this month.

About Union Pacific

Union Pacific (NYSE: UNP) delivers the goods families and businesses use every day with safe, reliable and efficient service. Operating in 23 western states, the company connects its customers and communities to the global economy. Trains are the most environmentally responsible way to move freight, helping Union Pacific protect future generations. More information about Union Pacific is available at www.up.com.

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