



Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen

A Division of the Rail Conference - International Brotherhood of Teamsters

Washington State Legislative Board

Workplace Safety, Health and Education

Shahraim C. Allen - Chairman

**Division 238 / Division 518 / Division 892 / Division 60 / Division 758 / Division 443
Division 402 / Division 58 / Division 104**

We will be seeking the following legislation, in the upcoming Legislative Session of 2019

HB 1669 Minimum Train Crew Size on Certain Trains

HB 2944 Safe Leave Act for Washington Railroad Workers

HB 1669 - Minimum Train Crew Size on Certain Trains, will maintain at least two persons in the locomotive cab of Freight and Passenger Trains. Allowing for their safe movement, establishing a system of checks and balances maintaining train crew awareness, observation of the train and its cargo in addition to assisting Emergency Responders when there is an incident involving the train, etc. With the not so distant proposal of 1 - Person Train Crews to include the looming threat of Autonomous Train operations, based on the overbearing

application of emerging technology by the carrier, it is in our best interest to contact Legislators and provide them with your experiences and knowledge of the rail-industry. As their constituents, your elected-officials are there to recognize your needs and address your concerns. It is up to all of us to provide them with the information they need to do so effectively.

Here are more examples for your consideration, to further convey our position of the need for 2-Person Crews...

Public Communities Endangered – Lacking Train Inspection by other Two Person Crews, when a moving train goes by another moving train and each gives a visual roll-by inspection.

Public Environment & Natural Resources Endangered - Two Crew Person Trains observe Right of Ways and report Fires and other Hazards.

Pointing out of Hazards - Two Person Trains point out potential Hazards they encountered to trains they meet, in order that they may avoid damage and injuries.

Two Person Crewed Trains inspect other trains they meet by:

1. Viewing
2. Smelling
3. Hearing
4. Feeling Vibrations
5. Reporting Smoke
6. Reporting Fires of Locomotives
7. Reporting Fires of Railroad Cars
8. Reporting leakage of Railroad Cars and Engines
9. Reporting Chemical Spills to the Air
10. Reporting Chemical Releases to the Air
11. Overheated Wheel Journals
12. Sticking Brakes
13. Wheels not properly positioned on the rail (derailments)
14. Dragging Equipment (derailments)
15. Loads not properly secured
16. Spilling of contents (open hatches)

- 17. Shifted Loads, Containers**
- 18. Open Doors**
- 19. Leaking of contents**
- 20. Any other dangerous condition**

Consistent communication with the Train Dispatcher when the Conductor is on the ground.

This necessitates a 2 - Person Crew to:

- 1. Operate the Engine***
- 2. Line Switches***

If we do not have 2 - Person Train Crews trained to operate under unfavorable conditions – what is done to provide service to the Public if the Centralized Traffic Control System is out or the Electrical Grid is tampered with essentially creating the element of Dark Territory?

It seems fair enough that at least a 2 - Person Crew would be assigned to these trains to provide a safe and efficient service.

In addition to 2-Person Crews, the need for additional crew members on Hazardous Trains has been established. At the request of First Responders in order to address the needs of observing rolling-stock and assisting in the separation of the standing portion of rail cars, from the derailed portion when they are compromised.

This type of action was executed at the Casselton, North Dakota Oil Train derailment by the passing Grain Train Crew, which reduced the damage caused by this catastrophic event.

HB 2944 - Safe Leave Act for Washington Railroad Workers, Ensuring that train crew members are alert, aware and fatigue free is critical for public and railroad safety, especially with the increasing rail shipments of hazardous and dangerous flammable materials transported throughout our state and communities.

Points of interest covered by the legislation are as follows:

Railroad workers are the only employees in Washington State with no paid sick benefits!

This bill improves public safety by allowing train crew members to take unpaid time off work when ill, injured, or fatigued without fear of unfair career ending discipline being imposed by railroad companies.

As we all know, many of us spend our entire working lives without ever having any regular sleep schedule, no regular waking hours and without any regular or predictable days off; and are subject to being required to report for duty at any time with only 1.5 to 2 hours' notice. This causes chronic fatigue, depression and other serious health issues. The Carrier will be mandated to work with the Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission to establish a Fatigue Abatement Program in your behalf.

This bill extends reduced FMLA qualification requirements already granted for airline workers to railroad workers, as we have similar work scheduling systems that make qualifying for FMLA workplace protection more difficult.

We want to be sure to convey to our legislators that alert and aware train crew members insure **SAFER train operations.**

Both pieces of legislation have been approved by BLET National Division President - Dennis R. Pierce and VP / NLR - John P. Tolman.