

Dear Mike. My name is Peggy Shrum. I am the founder of an organization known as RRESQ (railroad employee safety and quality). We have over 2,000 supporters nationwide, with more coming everyday. We are primarily the wives and family members of train crews. We began this organization because of our concern over the depletion of the National Rail System, and the increased harassment directed at the front line employees.

The outcome of your efforts on this docket can indeed (and hopefully will) be far reaching. With the NTSB unable (or unwilling) to conduct sufficient accident investigations, the FRA taking a backseat on issuing regulations, and the Corporate Executives lining their pockets at the tax payers expense, it is EXTREMELY important that we move to have regulations at the State level. There are numerous forms of this technology being implemented throughout the system, and while they are all quite different, none of them are being regulated. In essence the Federal Government has agreed to allow the carriers to usurp the craft of Engineer by eliminating all requirements and training previously demanded to become an Engineer. Below is a comment from an Engineer who recent attended a Remote Control training class.

"I just sat in on a remote control class and found out some things I didn't know before. First the remote control engine has to be set up as a regular engine in order to perform an initial terminal brake test and the remote operator (switchman) has to sit in the Engineer's seat and manually do the brake test, at this time the remote control engine is not a remote it is conventional and he is performing as an Engineer. Second the remote operator has the ok to sit in the Engineer's seat ring the bell and blow the horn over crossings when the job is going from place to place but it is not ok operate the unit not from the controls he is siting in front of.. but to operate the unit from the remote control pack (talk about real safety). Engineers have to pass very hard tests to become Engineers including the Air Brake and Train Handling Test. Remote operators are receiving one week training in a classroom to become Engineers, and lastly the remote operator or his helper (switchmen again) are now doing the daily FRA Engine Inspections when needed."

Our concerns reach beyond RCO. We are documenting miles of depleted track, where the carrier has failed or even refused to provide regular maintenance. We are also investigating a number of State decisions that required the carriers to take a larger role in grade crossing maintenance. In most of these instances the carriers have arrogantly defied any State decisions passed. The carriers inability to move traffic along it's tracks has now impacted road traffic in numerous Cities. And the carriers again the have arrogance to suggest that this is a taxpayer's problem. We can no longer allow carriers to go unchecked. When the CEOs of Union Pacific and CSX step down (and I predict in one year) the taxpayers are going to have a big mess on their hands. These men will leave our rail system in complete shambles.

This is bad business for the public sector. RRESQ can provide you with TONS of supporting documentation for your efforts. We attend City Council meetings across the

country and have been instrumental in achieving bans, providing public education, and getting local and State legislators onboard with the proposition that Regulations must occur outside the Federal Government. Please give me a call if I can help you in any way. Again, a positive outcome to the ability of the State of Washington to regulate the Out of Control carriers, it a MOST important outcome for us all.

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STAFF SHORTAGE DERAILS TRAIN ACCIDENT PROBE

The National Transportation Safety Board has dropped an investigation into why a freight train jumped its tracks and smashed into a Lomira factory in 1997, killing a worker inside the plant, a spokesman said.

*The safety board closed its investigation of the November 1997 Lomira derailment and **several other railroad accidents nationwide** because of staffing shortages, NTSB spokesman Ted Lopatkiewicz said.*

Thank you for your continued support,

RRESQ

www.rresq.com