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January 23, 2003

Ms. Marilyn Showalter, Chairwoman
Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission
1300 Evergreen Park Drive SW
Olympia, WA 98504-7250

RE: Docket # TR-021465

Dear Ms. Showalter,

I'm a locomotive engineer with over 32 years railroading experience and I'm writing to voice my concerns regarding the use of "Remote Control Locomotives". As a long time worker in the industry, I know first hand the hazards this technology introduces into the railroad work environment and more importantly, into Washington's communities. I am also aware that the Federal Railroad Administration has failed to take steps to effectively regulate the use of remote control technology to safeguard the citizens of Washington.

There have been numerous accidents in Washington, as well as across the United States, by railroads using this technology. The August 6, 2002 accident on the Puget Sound and Pacific Railroad at Shelton, Washington is just one example. On that date, a remotely controlled locomotive ran out of control for several miles before demolishing a truck on a grade crossing. The outcome of the accident could have been tragic had the locomotive instead struck a passenger car, school bus or truck carrying a hazardous substance.

There have been many documented accidents involving remote control locomotives recently. The number of accidents is certain to increase as railroads move to more widely implement this technology. The BNSF Railway currently uses this technology in Washington and has plans to vastly expand its use. The UP Railroad intends to also soon use it here.

I urge you to please take action to insure that the State of Washington immediately regulates and stems this threat to its workers, communities and environment.

Sincerely,

Terry Reddish

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CHAIR, WUTC

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