

WASHINGTON STATE LABOR COUNCIL

Every year, the main business of the WASHINGTON STATE LABOR COUNCIL Convention is the deliberation, discussion and action on resolutions submitted by the affiliated union locals and councils. These resolutions establish policy, programs and action for the WASHINGTON STATE LABOR COUNCIL. Delegates of the WASHINGTON STATE LABOR COUNCIL, 2004 Constitutional Convention held August 23-26 in Tacoma, Washington, passed the following resolution:

REGARDING SAFE AND SECURE RAILROAD OPERATIONS

Resolution #5

WHEREAS, the Washington State Labor Council, AFL-CIO, represents more than 450,000 working men and women in Washington State; and

WHEREAS, the Washington State Labor Council, AFL-CIO, advocates and supports laws that protect working families in Washington State; and

WHEREAS, within Washington State several railroads are involved in the transportation of hazardous materials (HAZMAT) by rail that are subject to uncontrolled release if their containers rupture from a derailment, vandalism, terrorism, or collision with a significant amount of these hazardous chemicals transported through our cities and towns in very close proximity to our homes, schools, hospitals and public access areas; and

WHEREAS, the freight railroads have chosen to operate Remote Control Locomotive Technology (unmanned locomotives) across crossings at grade through our cities and towns with as little as two weeks of railroad worker training; and

WHEREAS, the freight railroads are requiring railroad workers to work schedules that exceed the safety norms established by society, resulting in serious fatigue-related accidents in Washington State; and

WHEREAS, the citizens of Washington State expect safe and secure railroad operations from rested and well-trained railroad workers; and

WHEREAS, the Washington State Utilities and Transportation Commission has demonstrated leadership exploring these concerns and exists as an example for other federal, state, and local authorities to emulate; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Washington State Labor Council, AFL-CIO, supports the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen, a Division of the Railway Conference of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters, and hereby admonishes all railroads within the limits of Washington State to use fully rested by society's standards railroad workers and locomotive engineers that are federally certified to the highest possible skill level to operate all locomotives in all railroad operations in Washington State and demands that the Federal Railroad Administration promulgate such rules to ensure that railroad workers are not unnecessarily fatigued and individuals operating locomotives are properly trained to the highest skill level available for operating trains in Washington State; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Washington State Labor Council, AFL-CIO, calls on the Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission to move forward with Proposed Rulemaking (CR-102) under Docket Number TR-040151 providing Point Protection for Washington State citizens as part of Chapter 280-62 WAC; and, be it finally

RESOLVED, that in the interest of public safety, the President of the Washington State Labor Council, AFL-CIO, will send a letter to railroads operating in Washington State, the Administrator of the Federal Railroad Administration, and to the Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission outlining these concerns and in support of the position established by the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen, a Division of the Railway Conference of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters.