

February 16, 2003

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

RE: Docket #TR-021465

Dear Chairman Showalter:

I am very upset about the use of remote control locomotives in railroad operations. The Federal Railroad Administration has failed to regulate the use of remote control technology to safeguard the citizens of Washington State. Railroads are not considering my family's safety in their rush to experiment with this technology.

Railroad remote control operation is occurring or will occur in Seattle, Tacoma, Everett, Spokane, Pasco, Vancouver as well as smaller communities like Shelton and Aberdeen. Remote control operations resulted in a reduction of switch crew size from 3 people to 2 people on Union Pacific and Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railroads. Short line railroads could have an even smaller train crew. Now, fewer people will be safeguarding railroad operations on our public crossings, in business centers, and through our private neighborhoods.

Accidents are happening because of remote operation in Washington and across the United States. The lastest in our state happened in Seattle on February 3, 2003. I believe action is necessary immediately to stem the risk that railroads are bringing to Washington communities. We always seem to wait for death or bloodshed before issuing regulations or passing laws. Gas pipeline safety as example.

Please support the efforts of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers to bring safe and sane regulation of railroad remote control technology to Washington State. The safety of my family, my neighbors, and myself depends on your efforts.

Respectfully,

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