



# NEWS RELEASE

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## Rail Safety Bill Delivers Improved Safety for Workers, Public

WASHINGTON, DC – *Edward Wytkind, President of the Transportation Trades Department, AFL-CIO, offers the following statement on last night's House passage of H.R. 2095, the Federal Railroad Safety Improvement Act:*

"It's been a decade since rail safety laws expired in this country, and accidents have increased 29 percent during that same time. It's high time that rail corporations put their workers and the public ahead of their profits and institute some common sense changes that will improve safety for everyone.

"Rep. Grace Napolitano's approved amendment ensures that safety inspections are not outsourced to Mexico unless they meet the highest safety standards. Union Pacific has shown its preference to outsource this critical work to the lowest bidder, and we think it's right to require that U.S. rail safety, training and enforcement standards are met.

"We thank Chairman Jim Oberstar and Subcommittee Chair Corrine Brown for their tenacity and insistence that the role of government is to protect workers instead of the multibillion-dollar profits of rail corporations."

### *Background:*

This bill improves worker training, addresses harassment and intimidation of workers who report safety problems, and requires more safety inspectors to ensure that trains, equipment, track and railroad bridges are functioning as they should. Currently, safety inspections cover only 0.2 percent of railroad operations, and the Federal Railroad Administration often doesn't follow up to make sure identified problems get corrected.

The bill implements the recommendations of the National Transportation Safety Board to improve "dark territory" or areas of unsignaled track despite the fact that affordable signaling systems exist. It also makes significant improvements in addressing fatigue, which is often a cause of accidents.

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*TTD represents 32 member unions in the aviation, rail, transit, trucking, highway, longshore, maritime and related industries. Ten of these unions are railroad unions. For more information, visit [www.ttd.org](http://www.ttd.org).*

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