

# TTD NEWS RELEASE

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## Transportation Unions Call For Federally Mandated Two-Person Crews on Freight Trains

WASHINGTON, DC—The Transportation Trades Department, AFL-CIO (TTD) today endorsed a federal mandate that requires at least a two-person crew on U.S. freight trains.

“Just four months ago in Quebec Canada we saw firsthand why the federal government must act now to mandate two-person crews on freight trains as a safety precaution,” said TTD President Edward Wytkind. While the cause of that accident is still under investigation, the runaway train carrying 72 cars of crude oil that killed 47 people was parked uphill by a lone crewmember. “It is imperative that a second crewmember be on hand not only in cases of emergency, but also because long shifts and unpredictable work schedules out of the hands of rail employees can lead to incidents caused by fatigue,” said Wytkind.

The solution involves both regulatory and legislative action. TTD applauds the work of the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) in releasing an Emergency Order following the Quebec accident requesting railroads take immediate precautions. The FRA also instructed its Rail Safety Advisory Committee (RSAC), which is comprised of both labor and management representatives, to examine the issue of crew size.

“Unfortunately history has shown that rail companies consistently oppose two-person crew mandates. We have no reason to believe they would depart from this path now, leaving us with serious concerns that the RSAC process will fail to produce the policy changes so urgently needed,” Wytkind said.

TTD supports legislation authored by Rep. Michael Michaud (D-ME). The Michaud bill, the Safe Freight Act, mandates that one certified conductor and one certified engineer be aboard every freight train. While two-person crews are the norm, it should not be left to the rail companies to decide.

“We will push members of Congress to co-sponsor the Michaud bill,” said Wytkind. “We are disappointed that our nation’s freight railroads are not embracing this common sense safety reform.”

The [Two-Person Crew policy statement](#) was one of 10 approved today by the TTD Executive Committee at its fall meeting. [All 10 can be found at TTD.org.](#)

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*The Transportation Trades Department, AFL-CIO, represents 32 member unions in the aviation, rail, transit, motor carrier, highway, longshore, maritime and related industries. For more information, visit us at [www.ttd.org](http://www.ttd.org) or on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).*