

TTD NEWS RELEASE

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Bill to Extend Positive Train Control Implementation Misses Chance to Make Rail Transportation Safer

Washington, DC—*Edward Wytkind, president of the Transportation Trades Department, AFL-CIO (TTD), issues this statement about the Senate markup of the Positive Train Control (PTC) extension bill:*

“A five-year extension of the deadline by which Positive Train Control (PTC) technology must be implemented cannot be considered in a vacuum or in isolation. Rail employees, first responders, and communities have witnessed too many deadly freight and passenger rail accidents in recent years, including those involving the transport of crude oil and other hazardous materials. While the causes of these accidents vary, we know that passing long overdue safety reforms – not just simply delaying implementation of PTC – will make rail transportation safer.

“We unveiled a [plan](#) outlining measures that Congress can implement in order to improve both passenger and freight rail safety. That plan includes mandating at least two qualified crewmembers on every train; addressing chronic fatigue among rail employees; and requiring use of common sense technology such as alerter and shunting. We also released [reforms](#) to make hazardous materials transportation safer, including a call for better support and training for first responders and stronger tank car and inspection standards.

“A blanket five-year extension of PTC is the wrong approach. We understand that some of the reasons for delay in implementing PTC are outside the control of the railroads, but these companies could have done more to meet this mandate. Any extension should be of shorter duration and considered on a case-by-case basis while requiring carriers to submit a plan for how they will meet an extended deadline.

“At a time when the safety of rail transportation is gaining much-needed attention, it makes no sense for the Senate to only move a bill that delays implementation of life-saving technology without considering comprehensive safety reforms.”

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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 or on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

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