

TTD NEWS RELEASE

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Shuster-DeFazio Offer Sensible PTC Extension Bill

Washington, DC — Edward Wytkind, president of the Transportation Trades Department, AFL-CIO (TTD), issued the following statement on a bi-partisan bill that extends the deadline for implementation of positive train control (PTC) technology:

“TTD supports bipartisan legislation – introduced today by the Leadership of the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee – that extends the statutory deadline for railroads to implement Positive Train Control (PTC) technology on approximately 60,000 miles of track. While we have long called for implementation of this life-saving technology by the December 31st deadline as mandated by Congress in 2008, it has become increasingly clear that the vast majority of railroads will not meet this requirement. Unless Congress takes action to extend the deadline, a number of freight and passenger rail carriers have warned that they will shut down operations on January 1st rather than risk missing a legal deadline.

“The legislation, authored by Rep. Bill Shuster (R-PA), the chairman of the committee, and Rep. Peter DeFazio (D-OR), the committee’s ranking member, provides a three-year extension for the railroads to complete implementation of PTC, with the limited availability of two additional extensions granted on a case-by-case basis. We believe this extension is sensible as it holds the railroads accountable to a hard deadline for implementing PTC and it forces them to demonstrate that extraordinary circumstances exist in any request for additional extensions. The Shuster-DeFazio bill is an improvement over the PTC provisions included in the Senate-passed surface transportation bill which requires initial activation, not implementation, of PTC systems at the end of a three-year extension.

“As a PTC extension is enacted, Congress must ensure that commuter railroads receive the federal funding needed to implement this technology. The fact that PTC will be postponed for a minimum of three years on many freight and passenger railroads reinforces the need for Congress and federal regulators to advance long overdue [rail safety reforms](#) more broadly. PTC is an important technology that will save lives but there are other sensible measures that will make rail transportation safer across America.”

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