



MAINE AFL-CIO

A Union of Unions Standing for Maine Workers

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Testimony of Adam Goode, Maine AFL-CIO Legislative & Political Director, In Support of LD 1644, "An Act to Require Train Axle Bearing Sensors to Be Installed on Passenger Rail Lines"

Senator Nangle, Representative Crafts and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Transportation, my name is Adam Goode. I'm the Legislative and Political Director of the Maine AFL-CIO. We represent 40,000 working people in the state of Maine. We work to improve the lives and working conditions of our members and all working people. We testify in support of LD 1644.

We are here today to advocate for the mandatory installation of hotbox detectors on all passenger rail lines. This technology represents a critical step in enhancing safety and preventing potentially devastating derailments.

Wheel bearing failures are a significant cause of derailments, and these failures can be particularly dangerous on high-speed lines or lines carrying hazardous materials. Hotbox detectors provide an early warning system, allowing train crews to take corrective action before a catastrophic failure occurs, such as emergency stops and inspections.

Hotbox detectors measure the temperature of the train's bearings. When one of these detectors senses that the temperature of a component is far above ambient temperature, an alert is sent to the train's crew. Then, the crew may stop the train to inspect the car in question, catching small issues before they become big, costly, and dangerous.

The cost of inaction far outweighs the cost of implementing this vital safety measure. The potential consequences of a major derailment, including loss of life, injuries, environmental damage, and significant economic disruptions, are simply too great to ignore.

By mandating the installation of hotbox detectors on all passenger rail lines, we can reduce the risk of derailments caused by wheel bearing failures. Having hotbox detectors on all passenger rail lines protects the safety of passengers and the public, minimizes the potential for environmental damage and economic disruption and increases public confidence in the safety of passenger rail travel.

We ask that you support legislation that mandates the installation of hotbox detectors on all passenger rail lines. This is a critical step towards creating a safer and more reliable transportation system.