

Kansas State Legislative Board
International Association of Sheet Metal, Air, Rail, and Transportation Workers

TYE DRAGOO
Director/Chairman
Email: Ty@SMARTKS.org
Website: <http://kansas.utu.org>



February 2, 2017

The Honorable Richard Proehl
Chairman of Standing Committee on Transportation
Distinguished Members of the Committee
Kansas State Legislature, House
State Capitol, Room 582-N
Topeka, KS 66612

Re: HB2095 — Providing a special vehicle permit for certain vehicle combinations.

Dear Rep. Proehl and Members of the Committee:

The Sheet Metal Air Rail and Transportation Workers (SMART) is an opponent of HB2095.

HB2095 will result in job losses in Kansas. SMART currently represents approximately three-thousand active and retired railroad employees in Kansas. Today's train conductors do hard, heavy work in all weather conditions and at all hours of the day and night. Essentially, they are responsible for making sure that trains operate as efficiently and safely as possible, no matter what could go wrong. With major responsibilities comes professional wages. Our members live in Kansas pay Kansas taxes and buy Kansas products.

Hundreds of millions of bushels of grain are produced in Kansas every year. Railroads and the men and women that work on them offer various transportation options (single car, multiple cars, trainload, or shuttle trains) to grain shippers, and data shows a clear trend toward more efficient grain movements. Single car movements (typically defined as 1–5 cars) accounted for 36 percent of total U.S. grain carloads in 1985; in 2014, they were 12 percent. Multiple car shipments (6–49 cars) fell from 30 percent in 1985 to 20 percent in 2014. Trains with 50 or more cars include conventional trainload and shuttle trains; they rose from 34 percent in 1985 to 68 percent in 2014^[1]. This 68% increase in shuttle trains represents a large portion of workers in our organization. Internal estimates believe HB2095 will adversely affect the Kansas workers that represent this currently growing transportation sector.

Kansas's freight railroaders do a remarkable job meeting the needs of an extremely diverse set of shippers. The vast majority of rail shipments, including grain shipments, arrive in a timely manner, in good condition, and is safely transported through our communities. We look forward to continuing to meet the needs of grain shippers safely and efficiently.

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Please oppose HB2095 in the interest of Kansas jobs.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ty E Drago".

Ty Drago
SMART-TD
Kansas State Legislative Board
Director/Chairman

[1] *Association of American Railroads Grain Background report. Published: July 2016*