

IAM RAIL DIVISION



Congress Must Pass the Railway Safety Act

Position: Support passage of the Railway Safety Act (H.R. 1674/S. 576)

The Railway Safety Act of 2023 is a bipartisan response to the February 3, 2023 Norfolk Southern freight train derailment in East Palestine, OH, that poisoned air and water supplies for thousands of residents. There are 1,000 such derailments each year.

This 118th Congress legislation would improve federal safety regulations to make freight railroads safer for communities and rail workers with the following provisions:

- **Preventing unsafe locomotive & railcar inspections and mandates both are properly maintained.** Locomotive and railcar inspections are required by federal law but there is no guaranteed inspection time. Therefore, most freight railroads force inspections to be completed in 60 seconds, often by unqualified or ill-trained crew members.
 - The bill ensures that highly skilled and qualified workers are the ones conducting inspections (such as locomotive and pre-departure railcar inspections) and prohibits railroads from imposing time requirements on railcar and locomotive inspectors.
 - With the more stringent inspection mandates outlined in this legislation, you are effectively guaranteeing that highly skilled trade workers, who have undergone years of training to achieve journey-level status, are responsible for carrying out the tasks they have been specifically trained for.
- **Requiring a minimum of two crew members, a certified conductor and certified locomotive engineer, in the cab of most Class I freight trains.** While the Biden Administration issued a rulemaking establishing this, it must be codified to ensure Wall Street owned railroads don't jeopardize the safety of communities around the country.
- **Expanding the types of hazardous materials subject to increased safety regulations.** Some high hazard trains, like the train that derailed in East Palestine, carry vinyl chloride and are not subject to the strictest safety regulations.
- **Establishing minimum regulations for the use of defect detection technology and requirements for placement.** Defect detectors detect axle and signal



A VOICE FOR PATIENT CARE

A VOICE FOR HEALTH PROFESSIONALS

As a union representing more than 12,000 healthcare workers, the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers (IAM), supports a series of bills this 118th Congress intended to enhance safety for patients and healthcare workers.

Pass the Workplace Violence Prevention for Health Care & Social Workers Act (H.R.2663/ S.1176)

Introduced this Congress by Rep. Joe Courtney (D-Conn.) and Sen. Tammy Baldwin (D-Wis.), this bipartisan legislation would require the creation of a federal standard directing employers in the healthcare industry to develop comprehensive workplace violence prevention plans.

Why do we need Congress to act?

- There is currently no OSHA standard that requires employers to implement violence prevention plans that would help reduce workplace violence injuries among health care and social service workers.
- The lack of an enforceable standard means that OSHA, the federal agency created to protect workers' safety, has few meaningful tools to protect health care workers from the threat of workplace violence.
- Workplace violence doesn't only harm workers, it negatively impacts the quality of patient care those workers provide and makes them more likely to change careers.

The legislation would require employers to review and address security procedures, patient care policies, staffing, training, built environment, and record keeping, among other factors.

This important legislation will have a **direct impact on IAM members who work at facilities such as acute hospitals, nursing homes, clinics, rehabilitation centers and other related facilities.**

Pass the Long-term Care Workforce Support Act (H.R. 7994/S. 4120)

Introduced by Rep. Debbie Dingell (D-Mich.) and Sen. Bob Casey (D-Pa.), this legislation would help address the nation's healthcare worker shortages and focus on workplace issues like the need for protections against workplace violence for healthcare and social service workers.

- Helping to create a pipeline of well-trained healthcare workers with measures like grants to states for development and training programs.
- Addresses the needs of improving compensation and benefits for direct care professionals to reduce vacancies and turnover.
- Including language of the Workplace Violence Prevention for Health Care and Social Service Workers Act, which would require the creation of a federal standard directing employers in the healthcare industry to develop comprehensive workplace violence prevention plans.