Supporting Facts:
Oppose Legislative Efforts to Mandate Train Crew Size

- **The Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) — the nation's rail safety agency — recently determined there is no safety need for federal regulation on crew size as there are no data to show operations with two people in the locomotive are any safer than those with one**. After five years of analysis, the FRA decided that such policy would "impede the future of rail innovation and automation." The policy "is an affirmative decision not to regulate with the intention to preempt state laws."

- **Crew size is not a safety issue.** Many railroads — including short line and passenger railroads in the U.S. and Europe — already operate safely with only one crew member in the cab of the locomotive. Single-person crews would only be present where PTC has already been enabled and where it makes sense to have it.

- **Investigators do not attribute any rail incidents, major or minor, to crew size.** This includes the oft-cited Lac-Mégantic accident in 2013, which the Transportation Safety Board of Canada attributed to 18 causes and contributing factors — none of which included the one-person crew.

- **Railroads are safe and continue to improve safety.** Since 2000, train accident and hazmat accident rates are down 30% and 64%, respectively, while rail employee fatalities in 2019 matched an all-time low.

- **Safety gains in the industry coincide with reductions in crew size.** As technology has advanced, freight railroads have reduced crew sizes via collective bargaining from five to three to two. These reductions coincide with safety improvement particularly for accidents attributable to human error.

- **Crew size is a matter of collective bargaining.** Labor and management have bargained over crew size for 100 years under the processes of the Railway Labor Act.

- **The long-term viability of freight rail depends on the industry's ability to adapt and compete in a rapidly changing transportation sector**. Crew size mandates would limit the industry's ability to evolve and continue to provide significant public benefits with regard to the economy and the environment.

18 Contributing Factors to Lac-Mégantic

- **Industry proposals to transition the conductor from the locomotive to a ground based position is at least as safe, if not safer, than the current model.** On-the-ground conductors may be able to respond more quickly to an incident by driving along the track in a vehicle or by reporting directly to a location than by having a cab-based conductor walk long distances to reach the incident location.

- **Technology enables workers to do their jobs better and safer and should be embraced if it is more reliable and reduces human error.** For instance, PTC — which automatically stops a train before certain accidents caused by human error can occur — will ultimately lead to in-cab redundancies. Railroads need flexibility to maximize the technology's potential to further enhance safety.