

**RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF S. 650
RAILROAD SAFETY AND POSITIVE TRAIN CONTROL EXTENSION ACT**

BY THE RAILROAD-SHIPPER TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COUNCIL

WHEREAS, under the Interstate Commerce Commission Termination Act of 1995, Congress created the Railroad-Shipper Transportation Advisory Council ("RSTAC") for the purpose of advising Congress, the U.S. Department of Transportation and the Surface Transportation Board (STB) on rail issues; and

WHEREAS, RSTAC is a 15 member council made up of small shippers and small railroads, large shippers and large railroads and representing a balanced cross section of industries that use rail services; and

WHEREAS, positive train control ("PTC") PTC is a communication/processor-based train control technology designed to reliably prevent train to train collisions, over speed derailments, incursions into established work zone limits, and the movement of a train through a main line switch; and

WHEREAS, the *Rail Safety Improvement Act of 2008* mandates that PTC must be installed by December 31, 2015, on locomotives and on tracks that carry passenger rail and certain hazardous materials and will cover around 60,000 tracks in total nationwide; and

WHEREAS, on March 4, 2015, Senators Blunt, McCaskill, Thune, and Nelson introduced S. 650, the Railroad Safety and Positive Train Control Extension Act; and

WHEREAS, while Class I railroads have made considerable progress and spent approximately five billion dollars thus far on PTC development and implementation, technical and design issues and other challenges such as trained personnel for wayside implementation, installation of communication towers, validation of the Class I track databases, and PTC training for the Class I employees make nationwide implementation by the present deadline impossible; and

WHEREAS, short line railroads have many concerns about the implementation of PTC as it will place a heavy operational and financial burden on them if they are required to install PTC systems, how they will afford the high costs of implementation, how to provide the back office functions, and how they will equip their aging locomotive fleets;

WHEREAS, not only the railroads but also the FRA and OMB as well as numerous other entities such as APTA have recognized the impossibility of completing implementation by December 31, 2015; and

WHEREAS, S. 650 extends the current December 31, 2015, PTC implementation deadline to December 31, 2020, and provides the Secretary of Transportation with limited authority to grant extensions on a case by case basis based on safety and operational risk for up to two additional years; and

WHEREAS, S. 650 directs the Secretary of Transportation to revise the federal regulations requiring a Class II or III railroad (including a tourist or excursion railroad) to equip its locomotives with an onboard PTC system to operate in PTC territory; and

WHEREAS, S. 650 revises the railroad safety risk reduction program; and

WHEREAS, RSTAC has twice produced Position Papers on PTC, both times urging Congress to extend the time for implementation to allow an implementation that meets the goal of helping to improve safe operations on railroads as well as provide solutions to the concerns raised by the railroads.

NOW THEREFORE, RSTAC by unanimous consent of its 15 members adopts the following resolutions:

RESOLVED, RSTAC thanks Senators Blunt, McCaskill, Thune, and Nelson and the Senate Commerce Committee for their leadership in developing S. 650 to address the concerns important to shippers, the public, and railroads; and

RESOLVED, RSTAC fully supports the adoption of S. 650 and urges the Senate to adopt S. 650 to ensure that the best possible PTC communication/processor-based train control technology is implemented to reliably prevent train to train collisions, over speed derailments, incursions into established work zone limits, and the movement of a train through a main line switch.

Adopted this 13th day of May, 2015