

RESOLUTION NO. 4801

A RESOLUTION REGARDING THE SAFETY OF REMOTE
CONTROLLED LOCOMOTIVES

WHEREAS, Champaign County has a duty to provide for the public safety of its citizens; and

WHEREAS, railroads operate within the geographic boundaries of Champaign County, over public and private highway rail crossings, over and around public water supplies, and on property accessible to persons of all ages and abilities; and

WHEREAS, railroad equipment is known to present significant dangers to persons and property from collision, derailment, and the possible release of hazardous materials; and

WHEREAS, the United States government has issued a safety alert against vandalism and terrorist threats against railroads; and

WHEREAS, the operation of a railroad locomotive is traditionally conducted with the use of a locomotive manned by individuals who are rigorously certified and qualified by the standard established in 49 C.F.R. Part 240 of the Federal Railroad Administration Regulations; and

WHEREAS, railroad companies have requested from the Federal Railroad Administration (hereinafter "FRA"), and have been granted authority from the FRA to operate unmanned (remote controlled) locomotives by persons who have less training, testing, and qualifications than the individuals who normally operate a locomotive; and

WHEREAS, the FRA has issued "guidelines" and not regulations to provide for the implementation of these operations; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, by the CHAMPAIGN COUNTY BOARD that we urge Governor Blagojevich, the Illinois General Assembly, and the FRA to outlaw the use of remote controlled locomotives until all of the following safety considerations have been met.

1. Remote controlled locomotives should not be used to transport hazardous materials, switch cars containing hazardous materials, or switch other cars on or near tracks occupied by hazardous materials.

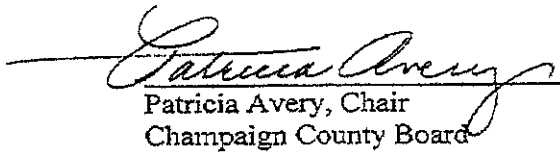
2. Remote controlled locomotives should not be operated over a public or private highway rail crossing without a person occupying the cab of the locomotive who has the required skills to stop the locomotive and its attached equipment.


3. Trains which consist of one or more remote controlled locomotives should be provided with devices to secure the operating cab and its controls against terrorists, vandals, and other unauthorized persons.

4. Remote controlled locomotives should be equipped with a clearly marked external device outside of the operating compartment, which is capable of stopping the locomotive in the event of a runaway train.

5. An effective track-related mechanical device has been developed to stop a remote controlled locomotive in the event of a runaway train.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that a copy of this resolution will be sent to Governor Blagojevich, the legislators representing Champaign County in the Illinois General Assembly, and the Administrator of the FRA.


Patricia Avery, Chair
Champaign County Board

ATTEST: 
Mark Sheldon, County Clerk
And Ex-Officio Clerk of the
County Board