

**Michigan State Legislative Board
Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers**

Whereas, one of the primary goals of the Metropolitan Detroit AFL-CIO is to help secure safe workplaces for Michigan workers; and

Whereas, the Metropolitan Detroit AFL-CIO is dedicated to the proposition that all citizens of Michigan have a right to a safe environment, free from the hazards of uncontrolled releases of hazardous materials (HAZMAT); and

Whereas, railroad companies that operate in Michigan, transport large amounts of hazardous chemical (solids, liquids, gasses); and

Whereas, these dangerous chemicals are subject to uncontrolled releases and spillage when railroad cars carrying HAZMAT, are ruptured during derailments or collisions with other rolling stock; and

Whereas, the railroads operating in Michigan have implemented remote control locomotive (RCL) operations in which unmanned locomotives will be used to switch railcars containing HAZMAT or switch cars on tracks adjacent to HAZMAT cars, occupied locomotives, and passenger trains; and

Whereas, in the United States, railroad companies have been allowed to implement these RCL operations without Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) regulations in spite of a request by the BLL to the FRA (November, 2000) to initiate regulatory proceedings under FRA Docket No. 2000-8432; and

Whereas, these railroad companies have failed to adopt and/or enforce the operational practices most critical for employee and public safety recommended by the FRA Safety Advisory on Remote Control Operations (February, 2002) and these railroad companies have failed to implement adequate training programs for remote control operations (RCO's); and

Whereas, more than forty (40) railroad accidents have occurred in RCL operations around the United States within the past two years, during hasty, unregulated implementation of RCL operation run by inadequately trained personnel - resulting in serious derailments, property damage, HAZMAT release, personal injuries and death to employees;

Therefore Be It Resolved, that the Metropolitan Detroit AFL-CIO calls upon the state of Michigan to prohibit the use of RCL technology in switching operations until such time as: (1) A thorough risk assessment study of RCL operations has been made and published by a third party; (2) An FRA regulation governing RCL operations is promulgated; (3) The railroad companies in Michigan give proper notice to all city, county, municipal and State Emergency Planning Committees of their RCL operations and specify the locations where those operations will take place.

Be It Finally Resolved, that the officers of the Metropolitan Detroit AFL-CIO will write a letter to the FRA Administrator, calling on him or her to reopen RCFRA Docket No. 2000-8432, recommending the study of RCL operations as requested by the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers, so that railroad employees, citizens, and communities which may be affected can register their concerns about the safety of railroad operations in their neighborhoods.