

COUNCIL COMMUNICATION

Manager's Recommendation: Approval of the resolution as follows:

Councilwoman Cottrell offered and moved adoption of the following resolution:

WHEREAS, the City of Saginaw has a duty to provide for the safety of its citizens; and

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

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

WHEREAS, a significant amount of rail cargo traveling through and moving within Saginaw consists of chemicals or other hazardous materials; and

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

WHEREAS, operation of a railroad is traditionally conducted with the use of locomotives manned by individuals who are rigorously certified and qualified by the standard established in 49 CFR part 240; and

WHEREAS, railroads, including CSX, have requested from the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) and have been granted authority to operate unmanned (remote controlled) locomotives by persons who are certified under the same 49 CFR Part 240 but have significantly less training, testing and qualification; and

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WHEREAS, these remote controlled locomotives will be operated by railroads in the City of Saginaw without limitations, by fewer employees who possess lesser qualifications; and

WHEREAS, the ability of employees to view the surroundings and react to potential dangers will be lessened by being stationed on the ground rather than in an elevated platform aboard a locomotive; and

WHEREAS, these remote controlled trains have already been involved in a number of accidents and injuries in various locations within the United States; and

WHEREAS, the FRA has issued "guidelines" and not regulations to provide for the implementation of these operations.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the City of Saginaw requests that in the interest of the safety of the citizens of Saginaw that the FRA develop comprehensive regulations for the use of remote controlled locomotives, and that those regulations ensure that the safety and well-being of the citizens of Saginaw will not be jeopardized by the use of such devices.

Adopted unanimously.