

Rail Conference Resolution on Technology and Workforce Protection

WHEREAS, the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen (BLET) and the Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Employees Division (BMWED), affiliates of the Teamsters Rail Conference, represent employees whose judgment, training, and experience are essential to the safe operation and maintenance of the rail network; and

WHEREAS, rail carriers are increasingly implementing automated and data-driven technologies, including automated track inspection systems, onboard monitoring systems, remote diagnostic tools, remotely controlled locomotives, and zero-to-zero autonomous trains; and

WHEREAS, such technologies, when properly applied, may support the workforce by enhancing detection capabilities, improving operational awareness, and strengthening overall system safety; and

WHEREAS, carriers have sought to use these technologies as a basis to reduce staffing levels, eliminate positions, and remove critical layers of human inspection and oversight; and

WHEREAS, no automated system can fully replicate the judgment, situational awareness, and accountability of trained railroad employees, particularly in safety-critical functions;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Teamsters Rail Conference affirms that technology in the rail industry must be deployed to assist and enhance the workforce, and not to replace it; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Teamsters Rail Conference will oppose any effort by rail carriers to use technological implementation as justification for reducing staffing levels, eliminating crafts, or weakening collectively bargained protections; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Teamsters Rail Conference will advocate for regulatory and contractual requirements ensuring that all safety-critical functions, including track inspection, train operation, and infrastructure maintenance, retain a mandatory human component; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Teamsters Rail Conference will pursue policies requiring workforce retention, training, and upskilling whenever new technologies are introduced, ensuring that employees share in the benefits of technological advancement; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that the International Brotherhood of Teamsters shall support the Rail Conference in advancing a rail industry model where technology strengthens safety and operational capacity without displacing the skilled employees who make the system function.