

TO: The Honorable Members of the PA House Consumer Protection, Technology and Utilities Committee

FROM: Alex Halper, Senior Vice President, Government Affairs

DATE: December 16, 2025

RE: **PA Chamber memo: Oppose H.B. 1191 – Undermining Rail Safety and Economic Stability**

On behalf of the PA Chamber, I urge lawmakers to oppose House Bill 1191, which includes a compilation of freight rail mandates the Committee is scheduled to consider today.

Rail safety is critically important, and we welcome interest in this discussion. However, this legislation will actually undermine safety and impose costly mandates, while disrupting commerce and harming Pennsylvania's economy. For example, arbitrary train-length limitations and mandated crew sizes fail to account for modern technological advancements, increase operational costs, and force companies to break up trains at Pennsylvania's borders – heightening safety risks and delaying freight movement. These disruptions would impair supply chains critical to Pennsylvania's economy, including energy production, chemical manufacturing, agriculture, and consumer goods, while driving up costs for businesses and communities.

The bill also introduces duplicative and conflicting requirements for wayside detectors and hazardous materials reporting, adding bureaucracy without improving outcomes. Many aspects of H.B. 1191 are addressed and preempted by federal law, which would create uncertainty and ambiguity, ultimately leading to legal challenges. H.B. 1191 also includes labor provisions which risk creating confusion rather than clarity in safety oversight.

Railroads have made significant safety improvements under current federal regulations, with mainline accident rates down nearly 50 percent and hazardous materials incidents down 78 percent since 2000. H.B. 1191 does not advance safety, rather it imposes redundant mandates that will complicate compliance, potentially endanger workers, and most certainly disrupt commerce and harm Pennsylvania's competitiveness.

We respectfully urge a negative vote on H.B. 1191. For questions or further discussion, please contact Alex Halper, Senior Vice President of Government Affairs at ahalper@pachamber.org.

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