



STATE SENATOR BILL DEMORA 25th District

Chair McClain, Vice Chair Dobos, Ranking member Grim, members of the House Transportation committee, thank you for allowing me to provide testimony in support of Senate Bill 233.

This is an incredibly simple bill, so I am going to be able to keep it incredibly brief. Especially since this committee passed a nearly identical piece of legislation, Ranking Member Grim's House Bill 372. Track maintenance equipment—such as machines that repair the track, clear snow, and perform other miscellaneous services to keep railroad tracks clean, clear, and safe—have evolved into large, train-like machines. And since these machines are often just as big as a train car, they can present the same dangers that are present at crossings, like being unable to stop quickly or in a short distance.

So this bill just adds “or other on-track safety equipment” into the revised code whenever it talks about train crossings. That means that when these maintenance machines go over a crossing, the crossbars will have to go down, cars will have to stop, and there are penalties if cars do not take the correct precautions.

SB233 had no opponents and passed out of the Senate unanimously. As I said earlier, this bill is nearly identical to HB 372, but there was one small amendment added in the Senate Judiciary committee to adjust the mens rea from “strict liability” to “recklessly” in situations where there isn't a visual, audible, or physical barrier for the crossing of on-track equipment. This amendment was adopted unanimously by the Senate Judiciary committee.

This is a very simple safety bill, train crossings can be dangerous unless precautions are being taken; so let's join the 35 other states that have adopted this or similar legislation and protect the drivers, and railroad workers of Ohio.

Thank you, and I will be happy to answer any questions.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "William P. DeMora".

Senator William P. DeMora
Ohio Senate District 25