

BY REPRESENTATIVE PIERRE

1 A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

2 To urge and request the Department of Transportation and Development to study the safety,

3 effects, and other impacts of longer freight trains.

4 WHEREAS, more than six hundred freight railroads operate in the United States; and

5 WHEREAS, each Class I railroad operates in multiple states over thousands of miles

6 of track; and

7 WHEREAS, the seven Class I railroads are BNSF Railway Co., CSX Transportation,

8 Grand Trunk Corporation (Canadian National's operations), Kansas City Southern Railway,

9 Norfolk Southern, Soo Line Corporation (Canadian Pacific's operations), and Union Pacific

10 Railroad; and

11 WHEREAS, a majority of the Class I freight trains have increased in length in recent

12 years; and

13 WHEREAS, the United States Government Accountability Office (GAO-19-443)

14 indicated the average freight train length has increased about twenty-five percent since 2008,

15 with average lengths of 1.2 and 1.4 miles in 2017; and

16 WHEREAS, one railroad runs a three mile long train twice weekly; and

17 WHEREAS, the excessive length of freight trains creates concerns with long delays

18 and blocking traffic at road crossings, impeding emergency responders, and prompting

19 unsafe pedestrian behavior; such as, climbing through stopped trains; and

20 WHEREAS, there are also concerns that longer trains could lead to loss of radio

21 communications among crew members and may cause delays at rail sidings and yards; and

1 WHEREAS, the excessive length and the potential risk of danger of train derailments
2 requires the careful review and evaluation of all the circumstances that contribute to them
3 in an effort to ensure the safe operation of longer freight trains on highway railroad
4 crossings.

5 THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby
6 urge and request the Department of Transportation and Development to study the safety,
7 effects, and impact of longer freight trains.

8 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Department of Transportation and
9 Development's recommendations shall identify dangers and measures to reduce the impact
10 of longer freight trains on highway railroad crossings and, at a minimum, shall include the
11 following considerations:

- 12 (1) The changes in freight train length over time.
- 13 (2) The safety considerations for operating longer freight trains.
- 14 (3) The potential safety risks.
- 15 (4) The best way to resolve railroad crossing issues.
- 16 (5) The railroads' financial and operational advantages and disadvantages to
17 operating longer trains.

18 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Transportation and
19 Development shall submit a written report detailing its findings and recommendations to the
20 House Committee on Transportation, Highways and Public Works and the Senate
21 Committee on Transportation, Highways and Public Works prior to March 1, 2022.

22 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be forwarded to the
23 Department of Transportation and Development.

DIGEST

The digest printed below was prepared by House Legislative Services. It constitutes no part of the legislative instrument. The keyword, one-liner, abstract, and digest do not constitute part of the law or proof or indicia of legislative intent. [R.S. 1:13(B) and 24:177(E)]

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Pierre

Urges and requests the Dept. of Transportation and Development (DOTD) to study the safety, effects, and impact of longer freight trains. Requires the DOTD to provide a written report of its findings to the House and Senate transportation committees prior to March 1, 2022.