



SF 4162 Motor Carriers of Railroad Employees

MN Statute 215.0255 is a great piece of legislation for railroad worker safety. Unfortunately, it is disregarded by some of the railroads and not complied with. SF 4162 adds penalties to the existing statute which will bring the offending railroads into compliance with Minnesota law.

The job of a railroad worker is incredibly dangerous. This is a well-known fact. What isn't as well known, is that railroad train crews spend a lot of time in deadhead transportation on Minnesota's roadways. These trips are made during all hours of the day and night, and during any type of weather experienced in our state.

When in deadhead transportation, we are also hauling all the gear we need for the duration of our trip. This includes overnight bags, safety gear, work clothes, railroad employee required equipment, and sometimes EOTs (end of train devices) which are large and heavy. Multiply this by two or even three crew members and any vehicle will be getting close to capacity.

Having a separated luggage area to protect riders during an accident is incredibly important. A well-marked vehicle designated as railroad crew transport enhances the safety of trainpersons when getting picked up at odd locations during all hours of the day and night. Hours of service requirements for drivers operating the vehicles so they aren't falling asleep at the wheel. All this and more are included in the existing law, but not followed by some rail companies.

Too many times our members are left standing next to the railroad tracks faced with getting in a compact car hired from a ride share company like Uber or Lyft, overloaded, underinsured, and not suited to safely transport them or they stand there in the dark, in the rain, and face a confrontation with their supervisor while waiting hours for a compliant vehicle. This is not a choice any employee should have to make.

Please support SF 4162, making an important Minnesota statute enforceable and stopping a bad practice by the offending railroads.

Reach out to Nick Katich with SMART-TD for more information.
(218) 310-7401 or sld@smart-td-minnesota.org