



# Railroad Workers United

*Unity—Solidarity—Democracy: The Rank and File in Action!*

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## RWU Resolution on Building Real Rail Safety

(Adopted 9-02-08)

**Whereas, many** currently existing joint “safety committees” and safety programs that are composed of representatives of both rail management and rail labor are, for the most part, designed solely by the carriers; and

**Whereas,** the model that these committees and programs primarily adhere to is one based upon a concept known as “Behavior Based Safety” (BBS); and

**Whereas,** this model of safety does not address the most important means by which we can successfully create a safe workplace; i.e., the elimination of workplace hazards; and

**Whereas,** BBS programs do nothing to address the problems at their origin, which are corporate, managerial and regulatory designs and decisions that may actually be the root cause of a number of workplace hazards; and

**Whereas,** while the carriers are content to advocate a BBS approach, this strategy simply serves to save the company money while doing nothing to address real issues that we as workers face everyday – inadequate new hire training, lack of adequate qualifying time, crew fatigue, faulty equipment, slip-trip-fall hazards, etc.; and

**Whereas,** a genuine “union based” rail safety program would be a cooperative effort between members of all rail unions, where both worker behavior AND hazard elimination are given due consideration; and

**Whereas,** the focus has always been on worker behavior, and despite worker participation in safety programs, management continues to spy on, harass, discipline and fire, leaving countless rank-and-file rail workers cynical, bitter and resentful about the carriers’ safety programs; and

**Whereas,** as a result of this, numerous union locals of the various crafts across the continent have withdrawn in disgust and protest from such joint union-management safety committees altogether; and

**Whereas,** much of organized labor – including the AFL-CIO and large industrial unions like the Steelworkers (USWA), Auto Workers (UAW) and Transport Workers Union (TWU) have condemned BBS as a fraud, gimmick and union busting tool that only benefits the company to the detriment of union solidarity and real worker safety;

**Therefore, be it Resolved,** that Railroad Workers United condemns Behavioral Based Safety as a detriment to union members’ safety and union solidarity, designed to only benefit the company; and

**Be it Further Resolved** that RWU urges rank-and-file union members to build independent, union based safety committees that are accountable to their members: and

**Be it Further Resolved** that RWU advocates the building of genuine union operated safety committees which address hazard elimination, not just worker behavior; and

**Be it Further Resolved,** that RWU calls on the various unions to stand united on this vital issue of safety and refuse to allow management to pit one member, one craft and/or one union against another in our efforts to build such programs on the various rail properties throughout North America; and

**And be it Finally Resolved** that a copy of this Resolution be forwarded to the International officialdom of all rail unions in North America.