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# United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION,  
LABOR, AND PENSIONS

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6300

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<http://labor.senate.gov>

March 11, 2003

Allan Rutter  
Administrator  
Federal Railroad Administration  
1120 Vermont Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Mr. Rutter,

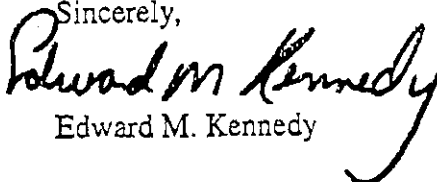
I am deeply concerned about the growing threat to worker and public safety from the use of remote control technology in locomotive operations. For the past year, there have been 37 separate rail accidents, including two fatalities, involving one or more cars operated using remote control technology. It is time for the Federal Railroad Administration to act.

The Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers petitioned for rulemaking on the use of remote control devices on November 17<sup>th</sup>, 2000, and has yet to receive a response. An FRA safety advisory, in February 2001 contained only recommended guidelines, which are not enforceable.

A number of cities and towns across the country have recognized this threat to public safety. In Massachusetts, the Boston City Council passed a resolution on February 13, 2003 demanding that railroads halt the operation of remote control locomotives until safety considerations are met. The resolution cites numerous safety concerns, including terrorism, public safety, passenger rail safety, and the lack of training by remote control operators.

The safety of locomotive operations is of great importance. We cannot continue to allow preventable accidents to threaten the lives of workers and the public. I urge you to address these issues as quickly as possible, and make every effort to ensure that FRA follows through on its mission.

Sincerely,

  
Edward M. Kennedy