



GREAT LAKES AND ST. LAWRENCE CITIES INITIATIVE
ALLIANCE DES VILLES DES GRANDS LACS ET DU SAINT-LAURENT

RESOLUTION 03 – 2015M

OIL TRANSPORT BY RAIL AND DERAILMENTS

WHEREAS, transportation of oil by rail has increased 40 fold in the past five years, now standing at over 500,000 cars annually; and

WHEREAS, according to the U.S. Federal Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration, crude oil originating from the Bakken oilfield is more volatile and dangerous than other types of crude, making explosions more likely if a tank car derails and punctures; and

WHEREAS, a train carrying crude oil from the Bakken oilfield derailed in Lac Mégantic QC on July 7, 2013, causing the tragic death of 47 people, destruction of half of the downtown area and the release of 1.3 million gallons of oil; and

WHEREAS, despite the introduction of new safety measures following the Lac Mégantic tragedy, there have been at least five serious derailments in the first ten weeks of 2015, carrying either oil from Alberta oil sands or the Bakken oil fields, averaging one every two weeks, in Gogama, Ontario- February 14, Mount Carbon, West Virginia – February 18, Hornepayne, Ontario – March 5, 2015, Galena Illinois- March 5, and again in Gogama, ON – March 7, 2015; and

WHEREAS, these derailments have caused explosions, fires, one death, environmental damage to the air, waterways, and soil, evacuations, destruction of property and the closing of water intakes; and

WHEREAS, following the first Gogama derailment that spilled over 6,200 barrels of crude oil and petroleum distillates, the Canadian Transport Safety Board issued a statement that said, “Preliminary assessment of the CPC-1232-compliant tank cars involved (in the first Gogama derailment) demonstrates the inadequacy of this standard given the tank cars' similar performance to the legacy Class 111 tank cars involved in the Lac-Mégantic accident.”; and

WHEREAS, the Canadian Transport Safety Board found that the explosive derailment of thirteen cars carrying crude oil and liquid petroleum gas in a Canadian National Railway train near Gainford, Alta., in 2013 was due to numerous rail fractures, even though tests on the line two months before the crash revealed no defects; and

WHEREAS, given the proximity of rail lines to the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence and its tributaries, the safety of rail transportation of oil must be treated as a priority to protect the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence and must be addressed binationally; and



WHEREAS, on May 1st, 2015, both the US and Canadian governments have announced a series of new and harmonized safety rules for rail transportation of oil and other highly flammable liquids.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT, the member mayors of the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative find the damage incurred to date and the future risk posed by the transportation of crude oil by rail following current safety standards unacceptable; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT, the Cities Initiative commends the improvements in safety rules and the common effort to harmonize the new measures on both sides of the border and recognize this as an important - yet insufficient - step in the right direction; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT, the Cities Initiative calls on the federal governments of Canada and the US to immediately invest additional efforts to insure adequate risk management and provide the highest level of security for our communities and for the water resources of the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence basin. Additional measures should include but not be limited to:

- a) Expedite mandatory scheduling for introducing enhanced standards for new and existing tank cars Complete harmonization of the safety rules between the two countries, especially regarding the phasing out of old, unsafe tank cars and the mandatory use of electronically controlled pneumatic brakes on all cars transporting crude oil;
- b) Adjust speed control regulations to all situations requiring risk management, not only in highly populated areas, where speed limitations are already part of operations;
- c) More frequent inspections of rail lines and tankers;
- d) Heavy fines for violations of the above rules

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED THAT, the Cities Initiative calls on its members to adopt this resolution and send it to their political representatives including the President of the United States and the Prime Minister of Canada.

Signed this 17th day of June, 2015

John Dickert, Chair
Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative
Mayor of Racine