

April 17, 2014

Civic Works Committee

I am requesting to speak to members of London's Civic Works Committee because of my concern around the high number of people who have been killed by trains in the area. This problem is not unique to London. Pedestrian train fatalities account for the vast majority of fatalities by trains in this country and far more people are killed by trains simply walking along the tracks than in derailments or are at vehicle crossings.

While the derailment in Lac-Mégantic was a wake-up call to the rail industry and governments to make rail safety a higher priority, the reality is that only slightly more than 10 percent of railway accidents are collisions or derailments.

Last spring I approached Burlington city council, where I live, and asked them to improve the fencing along the tracks as six people had been killed in a six-month period. Burlington set to work and developed a model which has made them a national leader in pedestrian rail safety. That model is easily transferrable to other municipalities and my hope is that members of this committee will agree to take a look at those initiatives and implement them as soon as possible. The issue of pedestrian rail fatalities is Canada's hidden rail crisis and I believe that every death and serious injury that has occurred on the tracks could have been prevented.

Thank you.

Denise Davy