

**BILLS AFFECTING INTERSTATE  
COMMERCE; EXTRACTS FROM  
HEARINGS, 64TH CONGRESS, 1ST  
SESSION; STATEMENT OF MR. H.E. WILLS  
ON H.R. 11243, THURSDAY, MAY 4, 1916**

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Statement of Mr. H.E. Wills on H.R. 11243, Thursday, May 4, 1916 by Various

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# **VARIOUS**

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COMMERCE; EXTRACTS FROM  
HEARINGS, 64TH CONGRESS, 1ST  
SESSION; STATEMENT OF MR. H.E. WILLS  
ON H.R. 11243, THURSDAY, MAY 4, 1916**



# **BILLS AFFECTING INTERSTATE COMMERCE**

## **EXTRACTS FROM HEARINGS**

*U.S. Congress. House*  
BEFORE THE  
COMMITTEE ON INTERSTATE AND FOREIGN COMMERCE  
OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

SIXTY-FOURTH CONGRESS  
FIRST SESSION

**STATEMENT OF MR. H. E. WILLS**

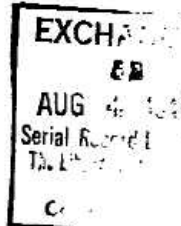
*Assistant Grand Chief Engineer Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers*

ON

### **H. R. 11243**

**SAFETY ON RAILROADS FOR PASSENGERS AND  
EMPLOYEES, AND HOURS OF RAIL-  
ROAD EMPLOYEES**

THURSDAY, MAY 4, 1916



WASHINGTON  
GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE

1916

COMMITTEE ON INTERSTATE AND FOREIGN COMMERCE.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

WILLIAM C. ADAMSON, Georgia, *Chairman.*

THETUS W. SIMS, Tennessee.	JOHN F. CAREW, New York.
WILLIAM A. CULLOP, Indiana.	ARTHUR G. DEWALT, Pennsylvania.
FRANK F. DOREMUS, Michigan.	JOHN J. ESCH, Wisconsin.
GEORGE F. O'SHAUNESSY, Rhode Island.	EDWARD L. HAMILTON, Michigan.
DAN V. STEPHENS, Nebraska.	RICHARD WAYNE PARKEE, New Jersey.
ALBEN W. BARKLEY, Kentucky.	JOHN A. STERLING, Illinois.
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WILLIE J. DAVIS, *Clerk.*

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BILLS AFFECTING INTERSTATE COMMERCE.

COMMITTEE ON INTERSTATE AND FOREIGN COMMERCE,  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,  
Thursday, May 4, 1916.

The committee met at 10 o'clock a. m., Hon. William C. Adamson (chairman) presiding.

**STATEMENT OF MR. H. E. WILLS, ASSISTANT GRAND CHIEF ENGINEER AND NATIONAL LEGISLATIVE REPRESENTATIVE, BROTHERHOOD OF LOCOMOTIVE ENGINEERS, 101 B STREET SE., WASHINGTON, D. C.**

The CHAIRMAN. Mr. Wills, are you ready to go on with your hearing?

Mr. WILLS. Yes, sir.

Mr. ESCH. Have you a written statement?

Mr. WILLS. Yes.

Mr. ESCH. Would you prefer to read it without being interrogated?

Mr. WILLS. Yes; if that is agreeable.

Mr. ESCH. I think then we had better do that, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Tell the committee which bill you are going to talk about.

Mr. WILLS. I would like to discuss H. R. 11243, the bill introduced by Representative Sterling to arrange compensation of inspectors.

In making this statement I also am speaking for Mr. W. M. Clark, vice president and national legislative representative, Order of Railway Conductors, Mr. Val. Fitzpatrick, vice president and national legislative representative, Brotherhood of Railroad Trainmen, and Mr. P. J. McNamara, vice president and national legislative representative, Brotherhood of Locomotive Firemen and Enginemen.

Mr. Chairman and gentlemen of the committee, the positions and present and proposed salaries are as follows:

Chief of the division of safety:	
Receives.....	\$4,000
Proposed.....	5,000
Chief inspector of locomotive boilers:	
Receives.....	4,000
Proposed.....	5,000
Assistant chief division of safety:	
Receives.....	3,000
Proposed.....	4,000
Two assistant chief inspectors of locomotive boilers:	
Receives.....	3,000
Proposed.....	4,000
50 field inspectors of safety appliances, and hours of service:	
Receives.....	1,800
Proposed.....	2,400
50 district inspectors of locomotive boilers:	
Receives.....	1,800
Proposed.....	2,400

The increases would aggregate about \$65,000 a year.

Bills (S. 3523 and H. R. 11243) have been introduced by Senator Cummins, of Iowa, and Representative Sterling, of Illinois, to change

the boiler-inspection law so as to authorize the increases in that division. The Interstate Commerce Commission, we understand, has ample authority to give the force in the division of safety an equal increase when the appropriations are made available.

The CHAIRMAN. Mr. Wills, if you will permit the interruption, the clerk informs me we have not yet received any report from the Interstate Commerce Commission about this bill. Do you know whether the Senate has received one or not?

Mr. WILLS. I do not.

The CHAIRMAN. I would suggest that until we receive a report of the views of the commission, we perhaps had better discuss the other bill and then later get the report and see if they agree with you about it?

Mr. STERLING. Is your statement very lengthy, Mr. Wills?

Mr. WILLS. No; not very.

The CHAIRMAN. Well, then, go ahead. I thought you might prefer to put your time on something we are ready to act upon.

Mr. WILLS. I would be perfectly willing, and in fact glad to submit this statement at this time, because we have had a conversation with members of the commission and I have reason to believe that when you get the report from them it will be favorable.

It may be said that the amendment proposed makes no change in the total amount authorized under the boiler-inspection law. Heretofore, the appropriations allowed that division have not come up to the amount authorized by the act, and although the original boiler-inspection law has been extended and given a much wider scope and the duties and responsibilities of the inspectors and the work of the division materially increased, it is not expected that the additional compensation to the inspectors, which is now proposed, will bring the expenses of the division up to the maximum.

The members of the organizations which we represent are directly interested in the enforcement of these laws. We have found by many years of experience in connection with these matters that we can not rest the case when we have come before Congress and secured the passage of laws to promote the safety of the employees and travelers upon the railroads, but there is a further step. We find it necessary to follow up the law and endeavor to secure its enforcement, and in each of these steps we are as a rule confronted with the same stubborn opposition on the part of the railroad corporations. The request we are now making for a small increase in the compensation of the inspectors is just another part of the greater effort to have the laws that Congress has passed properly and efficiently enforced. We believe the increases are just and fair, and that there are substantial reasons why they should be granted at this time.

The safety-appliance and hours-of-service laws are administered by the Division of Safety of the Interstate Commerce Commission. They require the use of automatic couplers, train-brake system of air brakes, self-dumping ash pans, standard drawbars, and secure grab irons and handholds. The hours-of-service law fixes a maximum service period of 16 hours for employees in train service and 9 hours for telegraphers.

In the year 1893, 44 per cent of all accidents suffered by trainmen were due to coupling and uncoupling cars. In 1915 less than 6 per cent of all accidents to trainmen were due to this cause.



In 1915 the records show for the first time less than 100 men killed and less than 3,000 men injured in coupling operations.

In 1915 there was a decrease of 81 in the number killed and 700 in the number injured in coupling and uncoupling cars, as compared with 1914.

The improvement in the condition of equipment is illustrated by the fact that in 1905, 250,000 cars were inspected, 22 per cent of which were reported as defective. In 1910, 435,000 cars were inspected, over 5 per cent of which were reported as defective; and in 1915 over a million cars were inspected, slightly more than 4 per cent of which were reported as defective.

The beneficent result of these laws is further evidenced by the fact that during the year 1915 there was a reduction of near 50 per cent in the number of instances of violations of the acts reported for prosecution, as compared with the years 1913 and 1914. The carriers reported in 1913, 301,743 instances of employees being on duty in excess of the number of hours fixed by statute. In 1914 this was reduced to 165,305, and in 1915 to 78,940.

A particularly gratifying decrease in the number of collisions is noticed. The records show that in 1907 there were 8,026 collisions, while in 1915 this number had been reduced to 3,538.

There is submitted herewith a more detailed tabulation of the statistics:

*Employees killed and injured from the causes indicated for the years named, as reported in the accident bulletins of the Interstate Commerce Commission.*

Year ending June 30—	Coupling or uncoupling cars, engines, etc., of employees on duty.		Overhead and side obstructions and falling or getting on or off cars, engines, etc., of employees on duty.	
	Killed.	Injured.	Killed.	Injured.
	1902.....	143	2,113	641
1903.....	253	2,788	771	9,017
1904.....	278	3,441	818	10,381
1905.....	243	3,110	725	10,422
1906.....	311	3,503	845	12,750
1907.....	302	3,948	924	14,156
1908.....	259	3,121	778	13,088
1909.....	181	2,353	557	11,488
1910.....	208	2,995	682	14,573
1911.....	209	2,996	666	14,869
1912.....	192	3,256	704	15,721
1913.....	196	3,361	721	16,257
1914.....	171	2,694	643	16,428
1915.....	90	1,994	458	12,128

The locomotive-boiler-inspection law and the act of March 4, 1915, extending same to include the entire locomotive and tender, are administered by the Division of Locomotive Boiler Inspection of the commission. These laws are designed to improve the condition of the motive power of the railroads.

The locomotive-boiler-inspection law has been in operation during a four-year period. Remarkable results have been accomplished during that brief time.

In 1912 there were 856 accidents due to failure of locomotive boilers and their appurtenances, which resulted in 91 killed and 1,005 injured.

In the fiscal year ended June 30, 1915, there were 424 accidents resulting in 13 killed and 467 injured. This is a decrease in the number of accidents of 50.5 per cent, in the number of killed 85.7 per cent, and in the number injured 53.5 per cent. The decreases have been steady and represent real improvements in conditions.

The law authorizes the district inspector to order a defective locomotive out of service until repairs are made. During the four-year period 13,445 locomotives which were being operated in a defective condition and in violations of the law and rules were ordered out of service. The results accomplished fully justified the action taken.

The following tables give the statistics in more detail:

*Locomotives inspected, number found defective, and number ordered out of service.*

	1915	1914	1913	1912
Number of locomotives inspected.....	73,443	92,718	90,346	74,234
Number found defective.....	32,688	46,137	54,522	48,788
Percentage found defective.....	44.4	52.9	60.8	65.7
Number ordered out of service.....	2,027	3,365	4,678	3,377

*Number of accidents, number killed, and number injured, with percentage of decrease.*

	1915	1914	1913	1912
Number of accidents.....	424	555	890	856
Decrease from previous year..... per cent..	23.8	32.3	4.2	.....
Decrease from 1912..... do.....	50.5	.....	.....	.....
Number killed.....	13	23	38	91
Decrease from previous year..... per cent..	43.5	59.1	60.4	.....
Decrease from 1912..... do.....	85.7	.....	.....	.....
Number injured.....	467	614	911	1,065
Decrease from previous year..... per cent..	24	32.6	9.3	.....
Decrease from 1912..... do.....	53.5	.....	.....	.....

The following table shows the total number of persons killed and injured by failure of locomotive boilers or their appurtenances during the past four years, classified in accordance with their occupations:

	Year ended June 30—							
	1915		1914		1913		1912	
	Killed.	Injured.	Killed.	Injured.	Killed.	Injured.	Killed.	Injured.
<b>Members of train crews:</b>								
Engineers.....	5	150	8	187	12	268	22	310
Firemen.....	7	207	8	290	12	478	19	491
Brakemen.....	.....	40	.....	46	6	79	8	79
Conductors.....	1	4	1	6	2	7	4	18
Switchmen.....	.....	4	.....	1	.....	2	.....	7
<b>Roundhouse and shop employees:</b>								
Boiler makers.....	.....	5	1	18	.....	10	2	3
Machinists.....	.....	10	2	8	.....	11	7	11
Firesmen.....	.....	2	1	6	.....	4	1	4
Inspectors.....	.....	3	.....	3	.....	3	1	2
Watchmen.....	.....	1	1	7	.....	8	3	6
Boiler washers.....	.....	9	.....	8	.....	4	1	4
Hostlers.....	.....	6	.....	9	1	6	.....	5
Other roundhouse and shop employees.....	.....	2	1	17	1	24	14	62
Other employees.....	.....	2	.....	10	.....	4	3	3
Nonemployees.....	.....	1	.....	1	2	3	6	2
<b>Total.....</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>467</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>614</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>911</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>1,065</b>

The improved conditions shown by these figures, with the increased safety to both the traveling public and the employees on the railroads which they indicate, can be attributed to the manner in which the laws have been administered. The figures represent the saving of human life and limb. They show that under these laws the railways have made changes in operating methods and in equipment that have bettered the conditions and lessened the hazards under which the men are compelled to work.

These results have been achieved, so far as we know, without any serious friction with the officials of the various railroads and without imposing any undue hardships upon the companies, and are, in a very large measure, due to the high grade of men who have been appointed to the positions and to their tact and intelligence and their integrity and interest in the welfare of the persons whom Congress intended to protect in enacting the laws.

This record was accomplished in spite of the fact that the inspectors have been paid an inadequate compensation, and we refer to the good work that has been done as a reason why the Government should now give these men salaries commensurate with the services they perform.

There has been no increase in the salaries of any of the district and field inspectors since the establishment of the boiler-inspection division, in 1910, although in both divisions more work has been imposed upon them. The safety-appliance and hours-of-service inspectors have been assigned to the investigation of wrecks, and the duties of the locomotive-boiler inspectors have been greatly increased by reason of the enactment of the law requiring an inspection of all parts of the locomotive and tender in addition to the boiler and appurtenances. A comprehensive code of rules was put into effect on January 1, 1916, and their enforcement has added materially to the work of the boiler-inspection division.

In general, the duties of the locomotive-boiler inspectors are to inspect the complete locomotive, and for this reason only high-class men can be used. As has been frequently stated before the committees, it is the practice of railroads to use different men to inspect the various parts of the locomotive, requiring a boiler maker to inspect the boiler, a machinist or engineman to inspect machinery, and an air brakeman to inspect air brakes. The Government inspectors are all trained and are required to inspect the entire locomotive, and have stood a very rigid civil-service test, showing that they possess all the necessary qualifications to do so.

This requires, first, a very complete mechanical training, as well as more than average ability, and much practical experience. Men who are performing work of the same character, but not so extensive, for the railroads are receiving from 20 to 50 per cent more than the inspectors of the Government. These men, because of their abilities and experience, are in demand by the railways for important positions, such as general inspector, general master mechanic, etc., and a number of them have recently been offered a considerable increase in wages to return to railroad service. Two have accepted such offers and it is feared that others will also accept.

If this is allowed to become general, and any number of men leave the service, the ranks will be depleted and the efficiency seriously impaired; because, although there would be no difficulty in obtaining