

1 **CONCURRENT RESOLUTION DESIGNATING RAILROAD
2 WORKERS DAY**

3 2019 GENERAL SESSION

4 STATE OF UTAH

5 **Chief Sponsor: Karen Kwan**

6 Senate Sponsor: Scott D. Sandall

7 **LONG TITLE**

8 **General Description:**

9 This resolution designates May 10 as Utah Railroad Workers Day.

10 **Highlighted Provisions:**

11 This resolution:

12 ▶ expresses gratitude for the dedication and sacrifices of the railroad workers that
13 helped build and complete the transcontinental railroad;

14 ▶ expresses gratitude for the railroad workers today who continue to selflessly commit
15 themselves to the good of our state and nation by connecting Utah and the United
16 States by rail; and

17 ▶ designates May 10 as Utah Railroad Workers Day.

18 **Special Clauses:**

19 None

20 *Be it resolved by the Legislature of the state of Utah, the Governor concurring therein:*

21 WHEREAS, the completion of the transcontinental railroad, including the dedication
22 and sacrifice of Utah railroad workers in building it, is an integral part of Utah and American
23 history;

24 WHEREAS, May 10, 2019, will be the 150th anniversary of the completion of the
25 transcontinental railroad connecting the Central Pacific Railroad and the Union Pacific
26 Railroad at Promontory Summit, Box Elder County, Utah, and the Golden Spike ceremony

29 commemorating the event;

30 WHEREAS, it took nearly seven years to complete the transcontinental railroad,
31 requiring all together between 12,000 and 15,000 Chinese, 8,000 and 10,000 Irish (2,000 of
32 whom where former Union and Confederate Soldiers), an undetermined number of African
33 American freemen and freed slaves, some Native Americans, and between 3,000 and 4,000
34 Latter-day Saint workers (cutting, filling, tunneling, and grade building), all told making the
35 workforce of the workers and laborers, who built and finished the overland route across the
36 Great Plains and the American West;

37 WHEREAS, the railroad workers reflected the multicultural and changing
38 demographics of the United States at that time and included immigrants from various nations
39 such as China, Ireland, and Germany;

40 WHEREAS, between 3,000 and 4,000 of Utah's early settlers also helped complete the
41 rail line working for both the Central Pacific and the Union Pacific Railroads, from Humboldt
42 Wells, Nevada, to the west, and to the Wyoming-Utah border to the east, covering over 250
43 miles (a little less than 1/7 of the 1,776 total miles of the transcontinental railroad);

44 WHEREAS, most of the construction of the railroad was done by human labor, with the
45 aid of oxen, horses, mules, wagons, and explosives, and required overcoming dangerous and
46 difficult obstacles to construct rail lines through the challenging terrain leading up to and
47 through the Intermountain West, including tunnel blasting and building on mountainous
48 terrain;

49 WHEREAS, at times, both railroad companies were laying down track at an
50 unprecedented pace, including a stretch of 10 miles of track, west of Promontory Summit, that
51 was laid in a single day by the Central Pacific Railroad crews;

52 WHEREAS, many of the railroad workers sacrificed much, sometimes even their lives,
53 to help finish the transcontinental line;

54 WHEREAS, due to the hard work and dedication of the railroad workers, the
55 transcontinental railroad was finished at Promontory Summit in Utah, linking the United States

56 by rail;

57 WHEREAS, if it were not for the sacrifice of the railroad workers who took part in the
58 construction of the railroad, the successful completion of the transcontinental rail line would
59 not have been possible;

60 WHEREAS, after the transcontinental line was finished, people and goods could more
61 easily travel across the country, introducing a period of growth and expansion in the western
62 United States;

63 WHEREAS, the railroad workers that helped build the transcontinental railroad were an
64 integral part of the history of the American West and of Utah, and the rebuilding of our nation
65 after the American Civil War (1861-1865), reflecting the hardworking determination and
66 sacrifice that helped grow the United States;

67 WHEREAS, the proud heritage and tradition of thousands of railroad workers, who
68 collectively by their brains and brawn, accomplished this grand national goal, continues to be
69 remembered today, as the railroad remains vital to our national and state economy, ensuring
70 that shipments of food, automobiles, agricultural products, and many other types of industrial
71 and manufactured items are delivered across our country; and

72 WHEREAS, the dedication and sacrifice of railroad workers today allows for the
73 continuous and safe shipment and delivery of goods and people across the country and Utah, 24
74 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year:

75 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature, the Governor
76 concurring therein, commemorates the contributions of the transcontinental railroad workers
77 and the dedication and sacrifice of today's railroad workers in the state of Utah by designating
78 May 10 as Utah Railroad Workers Day.

79 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislature and the Governor recognize and
80 express gratitude for the dedication and sacrifice of the railroad workers that helped build and
81 complete the transcontinental railroad and the workers today who continue to selflessly commit
82 themselves to the good of our state and nation by connecting Utah and the rest of the United

83 States by rail.