



# *Proclamation*

**WHEREAS,** there is a train involved incident every 3 hours in the United States and California ranks #1 in the nation in both Trespassing and Grade Crossing Deaths; and

**WHEREAS,** last year in California there were a total of 172 highway grade-crossing incidents Including 98 trespasser fatalities and 42 highway-rail crossing fatalities, all of which could have been avoided if trespassers and drivers were obeying the laws; and;

**WHEREAS,** there are more than 10,000 highway rail-grade crossings located within 52 Counties and more than 400 cities in California, BNSF Railway, Union Pacific Railroad, other freight train operations, and Amtrak passenger operations run through the City of Merced; and

**WHEREAS,** September is historically back to school month for most children and college students where many must cross railroad tracks to attend school, and it is important to reinforce rail safety with both children and their caretakers; and

**WHEREAS,** California Operation Lifesaver, the Federal Rail Administration, the California Department of Transportation, the California Public Utilities Commission, the City of Merced and freight and passenger railroads are working together to improve railroad safety and to educate children and adults of the dangers of not obeying the signs and signals around railroad property; and

**WHEREAS,** railroad operators, motor vehicle operators, and pedestrians will benefit from a combined effort by local, state, and Federal Government, industry and citizen efforts to promote safety around railroad tracks and crossings and reduce the likelihood of train related incidents; and

**WHEREAS,** September is Rail Safety Month in the State of California; and September 19 – September 25<sup>th</sup> is U.S. Rail Safety Week

**WHEREAS,** the **See Tracks? Think Train** campaign by Operation Lifesaver, and its federal partners aims to help reduce pedestrian and driver injuries and fatalities around railroad tracks by highlighting behaviors that put people at great risk; and

**NOW, THEREFORE, I, MATT SERRATTO, Mayor** of the City of Merced, do hereby proclaim September as Rail Safety Month and September 18 to 24 as Rail Safety week and commend the efforts being made to improve railroad crossing safety. We urge the public to be cautious and safe around railroad tracks and property and to remember; **SEE TRACKS? THINK TRAIN!**

Signed this 5th day of September 2023.

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*Matt Serratto, Mayor of Merced*