

12/3/08

RAIL LABOR STATEMENT ON AMTRAK BOARD OF DIRECTORS

DECISION TO APPOINT AN INTERIM PRESIDENT

The leaders of 12 Amtrak rail labor unions, representing more than 14,000 thousand Amtrak workers, express our strong disappointment over the Amtrak Board of Directors' appointment of an interim President and CEO.

The Amtrak Board has tried to preempt the incoming Obama Administration from determining the direction of Amtrak.

Rail labor urged the Board not to appoint an interim President. Instead, we asked the Board to leave Chief Operating Officer William Crosbie as Acting President until the Obama Administration had an opportunity to add its own Amtrak Board Members.

That will occur as soon as President Obama's selection for Secretary of Transportation is confirmed, at which point the new Secretary will replace the Bush Administration designee. In April, President Obama can make additional appointments to the Amtrak Board.

President-elect Obama has indicated that, unlike the outgoing Administration, he views Amtrak as a critical component of America's transportation future. It is unfortunate that the current Board of Directors would not wait to give President Obama the first opportunity to shape Amtrak's future.

Instead, the Board rushed to put its stamp on Amtrak's future, by first encouraging the resignation of Alex Kummant to create the vacancy, and then installing the person who represented the Bush Administration on the Board as Interim President and CEO. Amtrak's press secretary is quoted as saying the Board could decide to make the appointment permanent.

Amtrak workers have endured eight difficult years under the policies of Bush Administration Boards of Directors. Most Amtrak workers went eight years without a raise. Board majorities endorsed an anti-worker strategy that culminated in a Presidential Emergency Board (PEB). Their goal was the imposition of drastic concessions and no back pay for an eight year period. They counted on a PEB appointed by President Bush recommending what they wanted.

Instead, the Presidential Emergency Board rejected almost every one of Amtrak's anti-employee positions, and decried Amtrak's bad faith bargaining actions.

The Amtrak Board majority's first response was to sound out Congress about sidestepping the PEB recommendations by appointing a new arbitration panel. Failing there, the Amtrak Board reluctantly agreed to contracts that incorporated the PEB's recommendations.

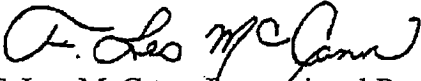
The unions did agree to allow Amtrak to defer payment of 60% of Amtrak's back pay obligation until the spring of 2009. After endorsing this arrangement, the Board of Directors, including the interim President, decided not to ask for any funding to meet the back pay obligation in their budget request to Congress.

The Board majority has consistently refused to advocate sufficient funding for Amtrak to flourish.

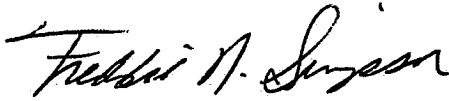
Amtrak workers are optimistic that President Obama's election heralds a new beginning for Amtrak, one in which service will improve and expand, and employees will have a voice. They expect a clean break with the failed policies of the past.

We call upon the Obama Administration and Congress to do all in their power to caution the current Board not to make the interim appointment permanent. The Board should defer to President Obama, whose upcoming Board appointments, including the new Secretary of Transportation, will surely reflect his vision for Amtrak.

Sincerely,



F. Leo McCann, International President
American Train Dispatchers Association



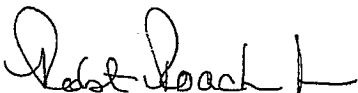
Freddie N. Simpson, International President
Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Employees Division/IBT



Ed Rodzwicz, National President
Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers & Trainmen



W. Dan Pickett, International President
Brotherhood of Railroad Signalmen



Robert Roach, Jr., General Vice President
International Association of Machinists & Aerospace Workers



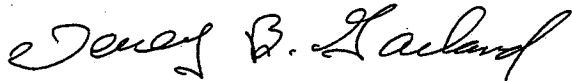
Dan L. Hamilton, Director, Railroad Division Services
International Brotherhood of Boilermakers, Iron Ship
Builders, Blacksmiths, Forgers and Helpers



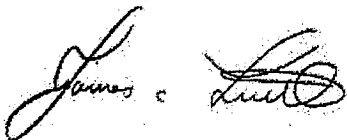
Edwin D. Hill, International President
International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers



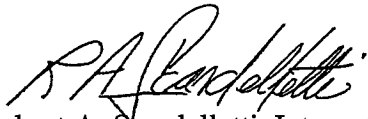
George J. Francisco, Jr., President
National Conference of Firemen and Oilers, SEIU



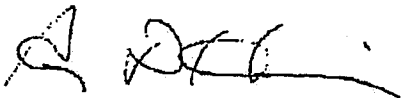
Dewey B. Garland, Director of Railroad
Division and Shipyard Workers
Sheet Metal Workers International Association



James C. Little, International President
Transport Workers Union of America



Robert A. Scardelletti, International President
Transportation Communications International Union/IAM



Roger Harris, FST, Local 43
UNITE HERE