



Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Employees Division of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters

Freddie N. Simpson
President

Perry K. Geller, Sr.
Secretary-Treasurer

October 23, 2009

General Chairmen
and System Officers

Dear Sirs and Brothers:

RE: 58/30 - Railroad Retirement Qualification

As you may know, there is currently a group made up of members of a number of rail crafts that are circulating a petition for substantial changes in Railroad Retirement. Those changes would include:

1. retirement with a full age and service annuity at age 58 with 30 years of service;
2. substantial reductions on the actuarial adjustment made to earlier retirements lacking either age or service necessary for an unreduced annuity;
3. provide unreduced benefits at age 50 for spouses of employees who retire or die after January 1, 2010; and
4. provide health insurance benefits for retired workers, spouses and dependents at the same level as they received when the retiree was in active service with the railroad.

After the resolution surfaced, I wrote to U. S. Railroad Retirement Board Labor Member V. M. "Butch" Speakman and requested detailed data on the financial impact to the Railroad Retirement System should this change take place.

Although, Mr. Speakman's letter does not provide as much detailed data as I had requested, the Board's Chief Actuary clearly articulated that without a substantial increase in contributions, such changes would bankrupt the System. According to his estimates;

"...the cost of these proposals would be 4.82% of tier II payroll. The present value of tier II payroll over a seventy-three year projection is \$319.8 billion. Thus, the present value of the cost of these proposals is approximately \$15.4 billion (4.82% X \$319.8 billion)."

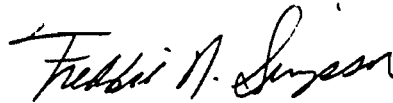
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The Board also advises;

"Furthermore, if such changes were enacted into law without any changes to the present tier II tax rate or compensation base, the Chief Actuary estimates that in 2021 the tier II tax rate would reach the maximum rate presently provided for in law (27%), and remain there well into the century. Furthermore, even at the maximum rate, by 2030 the National Railroad Retirement Investment Trust would be depleted and the Railroad Retirement Account, from which tier II benefits are paid, would become insolvent."

I know this information is not as complete as I would like; however, I hope that this will adequately answer some of the questions that have been raised. Obviously, all of us want to permit the hard working members of the Brotherhood to retire at the earliest age possible. However, we cannot pursue that goal at the expense of either bankrupting the System in the future, or putting an intolerable tax burden on those who remain working to support those who have retired. At some point I expect to receive the detailed data that I have requested from Mr. Speakman, and I will make that information available.

Fraternally yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Freddie N. Simpson".

President

cc: Mr. Perry K. Geller, Sr.
National Division Vice Presidents
Local Lodge Secretary-Treasurers
Mr. William A. Bon
Mr. E. Randall Brassell
Mr. Donald F. Griffin
Mr. William A. Hildenbrand