



Mark B. Kenny
General Chairman

BLET General Committee of Adjustment

Amtrak/MBCR/Connex

Pennsylvania Federation BMWED



Jed Dodd
General Chairman

May 19, 2005

All BLET and BMWED Amtrak Members

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

We are writing jointly to update you on the current Amtrak situation, which is one of the most severe crises in the railroad's 35-year history. Making matters worse, attacks on Amtrak workers from within are as bad as, if not worse than, those coming from Amtrak's external opponents.

The Bush Administration's budget for Fiscal Year 2006 provides for **"zero funding"** for Amtrak operations. It seeks to eliminate all long-distance service, make the States responsible for the remaining service, and spin off and privatize what is left. The cynically-named Passenger Rail Investment Reform Act — recently introduced as H.R. 1713 — would force Amtrak into bankruptcy court and provide only a paltry \$360 million for the Surface Transportation Board to oversee continued operations of commuter service in the Northeast Corridor alone. If successful, this proposal would most certainly have a grave impact on our freight Brothers and Sisters, because a substantial portion of Railroad Retirement's tax base would simply disappear.

Coupled with a veiled request for \$1.8 billion in funding *for this year only*, the so-called "Reform Plan" presented by Amtrak's Board of Directors, comprised of hand-picked cronies of President Bush, is equally as bad as the Administration's proposal. Long-distance service would be placed on a glidepath to extinction because those trains would have to meet performance standards unidentified by the Board. It also demands splitting up, privatizing, and outsourcing portions of the system. Still worse, its proposal aimed at "labor reform" would devastate wages and working conditions. Our membership would no longer be under the Railway Labor Act; instead, Amtrak would terminate all collective bargaining agreements and have Congress rewrite them to give back precisely what we have been unwilling to surrender at the bargaining table for the past five years. Future workers would be placed into Social Security versus Railroad Retirement, thus jeopardizing the system for current retirees and those of us who have paid into Railroad Retirement for our entire careers. The Board plan also restricts the ability of Amtrak workers to obtain fair compensation for on-the-job injuries.

Amtrak management has also opened a second assault against our members and other crafts by waging a daily, unrelenting attack on labor throughout the system. With the Gunn management philosophy at the forefront of their thinking, they go out of their way to find new and more ridiculous ways to violate work rules and make life even more unbearable for workers. Outrageous levels of discipline are being imposed for petty incidents, and the present

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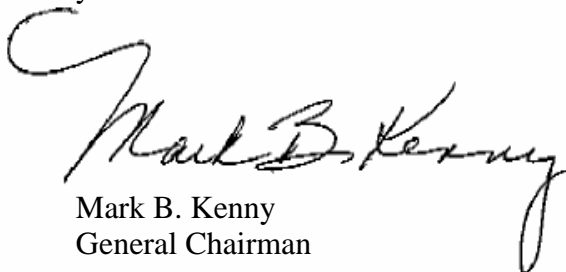
management team has brought new meaning to the term harassment. Supervisors have even interfered with the peaceful leafletting of trains in California, where passengers are being urged to help save Amtrak.

This “scorched earth” policy is nothing more than a distraction that is designed to camouflage the failures and incompetence of the management team led by Amtrak President David Gunn and Labor Relations Vice President Joseph Bress. Rather than using the latest problems with the Acela equipment as an opportunity to educate the Congress and the American people that you simply can’t run a 21st Century train on 19th Century tracks, the Gunn/Bress team has elected, instead, to forego admitting the obvious and decided to betray the men and women who have sacrificed to keep Amtrak limping along for more than a generation — and the 25 million travelers who rely on them — by attacking our members in a vicious and cowardly fashion.

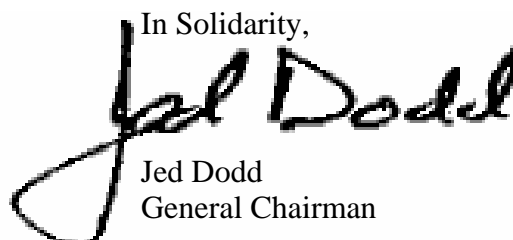
Both of us have done battle with David Gunn more than once over the years, and we have been awaiting the arrival of the *real* David Gunn since he assumed Amtrak’s presidency. So these latest developments come as no real surprise to us. Because of that experience, we have been working at the center of Rail Labor’s fight against the attack on Amtrak workers. Our new partners in the Teamsters have backed our goals and strategies 100%, and are helping lead the AFL-CIO’s Transportation Trades Department (“TTD”) in organizing Rail Labor’s response.

At our urging, the bi-partisan leadership of the relevant House committees have introduced two pieces of legislation — H.R. 1630 and H.R. 1631 — that would provide Amtrak with \$2 billion a year for the next three years and set a solid foundation for further development of intercity passenger rail service. This is good start, and BMWED and BLET leaders will be lobbying Capitol Hill later this month to build support for these bills. In addition, with our help TTD has launched a grassroots education and information campaign to galvanize support for preserving Amtrak from among state and local government officials, ridership groups, organized labor and other allies.

We will continue to wage this battle and fight to preserve your wages and working conditions, which have been won through decades of struggle. But, victory will not be secured without your support and active participation. **You and your family must make this struggle your own, because your economic security will be determined by the outcome.** You can become more informed on the issues by visiting our websites — at www.pennfedbmwe.org and www.bletamt.org — and additional materials can be found at www.ttd.org for your use. The first step you must take is to call or write your U.S. Representative and urge their support of H.R. 1630 and H.R. 1631. Please help us fight and win this battle, because the job you save will be your own!



Mark B. Kenny
General Chairman

In Solidarity,

Jed Dodd
General Chairman