

## Carmen and Clerks Ratify National Freight Rail Agreements

By strong majorities of 75 percent and 84 percent of those voting, TCU carmen and clerks at the major U.S. freight railroads ratified updated contracts that will generate solid wage increases and income gains.

The agreements for the two groups took effect October 1. Contract terms are retroactive to January 1, 2005 and extend through December 31, 2009.

On a compounded basis, wage increases will total 18.2 percent. "The net money generated by this agreement is significantly higher than what's been produced by recent national contracts," both TCU International President Bob Scardelletti

and Carmen Division President Rich Johnson reported.

Moreover, "this contract contains no workrule concessions, despite carrier demands during two years of bargaining for sweeping roll-backs in employee protection and expansion of contracting out." Health and welfare costs to members are fixed at 15 percent of the carriers' insurance costs.

Scardelletti and Johnson note that through much of the two and a half years of negotiations, the carriers were "emboldened by Republican control of Congress and the White House" in pursuing hard line bargaining tactics, but

progress began after the Democratic congressional victory last November.

### Contract Ratified at New Jersey Transit

In other bargaining news, by a vote of nearly 85 percent in favor, members of Lodge 626 at New Jersey Transit overwhelmingly ratified their new contract. The agreement covers employees in the clerical and TC-Division crafts. International Representative Russell Oathout led the negotiating committee; Anthony Stevens is Local Chairman of Lodge 626.

### Amtrak Update

TCU continues to call on the National Mediation Board to release us from mediation in negotiations that have stretched past eight years for carmen and supervisors and almost three years for clerical and on-board service members. This action will start the clock running again, moving toward the likelihood of a Presidential Emergency Board and the possibility of a strike. "We are up against a carrier making radical concessionary demands and tak-



ing an intransigent negotiating position,” said International Vice President Joel Parker, a former Amtrak general chairman. “It is long past time to move forward and we have urged the NMB to acknowledge that. Then we must do whatever it takes to bring home to the membership what they deserve.”

Meanwhile, on the legislative front, Amtrak funding is moving through Congress. H.R. 3074, a fiscal year 2008 Transportation-Housing and Urban Development appropriations bill, passed the Senate by a vote of 88-7 on September 12 and at press time awaited House-Senate conference. “The bill would give Amtrak \$1.4 billion – \$600 million more than requested by President Bush,” said TCU International Vice President and National Legislative Director Bob Davis.

### **Bauman Elected Carmen Division Board Chairman**

The Carmen Division Executive Board elected L. C. Bauman, International Representative of Unit 320, as its Chairman and to serve as Grand Lodge Trustee after the retirement in August of Unit 200 International Representative J.V. Waller, who held both posts.

At Unit 200, also as a result of Waller’s retirement,

Jack Wright is now the International Representative and Roger Cain will serve as Assistant International

Representative. For more information see the Carmen Division section at [www.TCUnion.org](http://www.TCUnion.org).



Bill Burke, Page One Photography

*TCU endorsed Senator Hillary Clinton in the Democratic presidential primary after her appearance at the IAM National Staff Conference in Orlando, FL.*

## **Sen. Hillary Clinton Wins TCU Endorsement**

TCU has endorsed Senator Hillary Clinton (D-NY) in her primary election campaign for president of the United States. The endorsement followed a ‘*Conversation with the Candidates*’ forum where several candidates appeared during the IAM National Staff Conference in Orlando, FL, which TCU officers attended. “This forum confirmed my belief that the best candidate

for our members and all of labor is Hillary Clinton,” said Scardelletti. “She gives American workers the best opportunity to have a friend and advocate in the White House.” He encourages members and their families to become active campaigners for Clinton. “She has earned our support: She is right on Amtrak, she is right on pensions and she is right on workers’ rights.”