

Transportation Communications Union

January 28, 2008

The Honorable James Oberstar
2365 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Oberstar:

As International President of the Transportation Communications International Union (TCU) representing over 7,500 AMTRAK workers out of the total 15,000 unionized AMTRAK workforce, I want to personally extend my heartfelt gratitude to you and your staff for all of your efforts through the years in supporting AMTRAK funding. The specific crafts that TCU represents are: Clerical, On-Board Service Workers, Carmen, and unionized Supervisors (Product Line, Maintenance of Equipment and Maintenance of Way).

I especially thank you for your recent efforts in supporting all of the AMTRAK unions which have just reached a tentative contract: the Transportation Communications International Union's Brotherhood of Railway Carmen Division and the Transportation Communications International Union's ARASA Division/Maintenance of Way and Maintenance of Equipment Supervisors; Transport Workers Union of America; Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Employees; International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers; International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers; Brotherhood of Railroad Signalmen; American Train Dispatchers Association; and the National Conference of Firemen and Oilers/SEIU.

For eight years all Amtrak unions decried Amtrak's bad faith bargaining tactics. All we asked was that Amtrak workers not be the stepchildren of the railroad industry, and the fact that Amtrak is dependent on federal funding in no way justified sub-industry standard wages, benefits and working conditions.

When we finally were given the opportunity to present our case to a neutral body, Presidential Emergency Board 242 appointed by President Bush, our position was vindicated. I know many were skeptical that we could get a fair hearing from such a Board. But our case was so strong that the Board overwhelmingly adopted our contract settlement proposals, and squarely put the blame for the unprecedented eight year impasse in bargaining on Amtrak's bad faith bargaining strategy. In recommending full back pay, the Board recognized that Amtrak workers had in effect given Amtrak an eight-year interest free loan, and that while the amount might seem large at



first glance, that was only because it covered so many years. In effect, the Board found that Amtrak could not be rewarded for purposefully stalling bargaining, and then crying inability to pay.

Your perseverance in standing behind that report, even though you know that additional funds will need to be allocated to pay the accumulated back pay, is what I am telling our members is the difference between a Democrat and a Republican. This is one great example of why it is so important to elect a Democratic president, more Democratic senators and more Democratic members of the House of Representatives. All of us in TCU and, for that matter, all of organized labor, are working extremely hard to get Democrats elected. I, and I am sure the leaders of all the other AMTRAK unions, will use this as an example of how Democrats can affect the daily life of all working men and women in a positive way. Democrats - such as you - are the ones who care about working Americans. Railroaders have good jobs and they are good jobs because of the unions and your support. They are the real middle class of this nation, which all of us, working together, are trying to preserve.

Thank you, once again, for supporting us during this extremely difficult eight-year period. Also, I particularly want to mention that your presence on January 18, at AMTRAK's Headquarters, when the unions signed the tentative agreements was particularly special to all of us in labor. Your strong words of support for AMTRAK workers and their unions, in front of AMTRAK's Management, were extremely impressive and clearly showed how genuine your support is for us.

We now ask for your continued support in achieving adequate funding for AMTRAK in order to allow AMTRAK to fulfill the back pay obligation to their employees.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "R.A. Scardelletti". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the typed name.

Robert A. Scardelletti
International President