

CONGRESSMAN ALBIO SIRES
ONE MINUTE FLOOR STATEMENT
JULY 7, 2011
APPROXIMATELY 12:00 P.M.

- Mister Speaker, I rise today to oppose the privatization of Amtrak.
- Privatization of Amtrak would threaten reliable, dependable, and accessible passenger rail service throughout the United States.
- I travel home every weekend to my district in New Jersey on Amtrak, and Amtrak's service is an essential part of our region's economic vitality.
- Under the plan to privatize Amtrak, the essential service they provide to millions of passengers could be lost, and nearly 20,000 Amtrak jobs could be eliminated.
- State-owned infrastructure that Amtrak currently maintains could be turned over to the already deficit-burdened States to maintain.
- It is likely that station stops will be cut, and commuter rail services will bear increased costs.
- **Additionally, freight railroads that currently use Amtrak supported lines may face logistical problems if Amtrak becomes privatized.**
- Under the proposal to privatize Amtrak, many important labor provisions will be eliminated.
- Future railroad employees will be exempt from disability, pension, retirement, and unemployment benefits.
- By removing future employees from these benefit systems, current and retired employees will be negatively affected, and railroads will face increased taxes to maintain solvency of these systems.
- I urge my colleagues to oppose the privatization of Amtrak, which will negatively impact commuters, workers, Amtrak, and other railroads.