



Transportation Communications Union/IAM

International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers



God Bless America

Robert A. Scardelletti, *National President*

LEGISLATIVE DEPARTMENT

Ron Kloos, *National Vice President / National Legislative Director*

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February 10, 2012

Dear Representative:

The American Energy and Infrastructure Jobs Act, HR 7, is, without a doubt, the worst transportation bill ever presented by Congress. It is flawed for many reasons; the bill imperils funding for commuter rail, it micro-manages Amtrak's food and beverage service, eliminates Amtrak's ability to properly defend itself with the use of outside counsel and the bill removes vital protections for employees who handle hazardous materials. In addition, it guts public employees' pensions in order to help pay for it—and much more.

On behalf of the Transportation Communications Union/IAM and the over 50,000 railroad members in both freight and passenger rail, as well as on various commuter lines throughout the United States that we represent, we urge you to oppose this bill.

Our union strongly disagrees with the provisions in the bill that would end dedicated funding for public transportation, including commuter rail. Currently, public transportation is funded by 2.86 cents/gallon of the federal gas tax, which is placed in the mass transit account of the Highway Trust Fund. Under the bill, public transit would be paid for out of an "Alternative Transportation Account" funded with general taxes. Instead of being placed in a secure account, as it is today, public transportation money would be subject to the unpredictable annual budget process and could be cut at any time, thus forcing states to cut vital services. Public transportation relies on long-term, stable funding in order to carry out long-term planning and major construction projects that employ thousands of people. Moreover, this erodes the principle that transportation spending should be funded by dedicated fees, like the gas tax.

The bill is also a give-away to foreign corporations who seek to get a foothold in the operations of U.S. transit systems through financial incentives by privatizing operations.

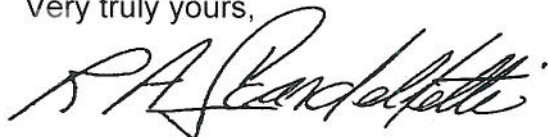
We object vehemently to Congress trying to micro-manage Amtrak's food and beverage service, as it has in the past, but never successfully. In November 2005, Amtrak was pushed by Congress to enter into a contract with Subway to provide fast food on the train. The plan called for a four-month trial service, but after only four days Subway pulled out because of the logistics and complications of providing interstate food service on the train. Amtrak has had 40 years of experience to try every food service model available based on service requirements and passengers' needs. Amtrak and the industry experts have determined that Amtrak's method is the most efficient and cost-effective way to deliver food and beverage service on the train.

The purpose of the Surface Transportation Bill is supposed to be to improve and repair the nation's infrastructure in order to ensure our continued mobility, economic competitiveness and job creations to meet the energy challenges of the 21st century.

The Senate bill does not contain all the controversial provisions that the House bill does and has bi-partisan support. Nor does the House bill contain the environmentally-friendly freight rail provisions, and the strong incentives for passenger and commuter rail, that exist in the Senate bill.

Therefore, we urge the House to adopt the Senate bill that puts Americans back to work, improves our crumbling infrastructure, and helps get our economy back on track.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "R.A. Scardelletti". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "R" and "A".

Robert A. Scardelletti
National President
Transportation Communications Union/IAM