



# Transportation Communications Union/IAM

International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers



God Bless America

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March 12, 2012

The Honorable Harry Reid  
Majority Leader  
United States Senate  
S-221 Capitol  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Majority Leader Reid:

I am writing on behalf of the members of the Transportation Communications Union/IAMAW to ask that you work with Senator Begich to restore Federal Transit Administration (FTA) formula funding levels in the Senate Banking Committee's title of the Surface Transportation reauthorization bill. TCU represents workers at the Alaska Railroad.

The Alaska Railroad is a state railroad with a board appointed by the Governor. It provides "public transportation" by rail as defined in the Federal Transit Act. Unlike other FTA recipient railroads, the Alaska Railroad has only been allowed to count 60% of its passenger track for FTA funding formulas. The Banking Committee-reported bill would cut that even more to about 10% of its passenger system, or an 83% cut in formula funds for this public railroad.

No other FTA recipient passenger railroad is given such a harsh 5/6th cut in the bill. Such a big cut in essential capital funds would drastically affect the Railroad and its workers. It would result in employee reductions of about 1/3rd, cause a default on FTA-approved GARVEE bonds issued in reliance on current law, and cause a dramatic cut in essential rail passenger service in Alaska.

My request on behalf of our union workers is that a way be found to prevent such a drastic cut to the Alaska Railroad's formula funds. Please work with Senators Begich and Murkowski on an amendment they have prepared for the Managers' Amendment package. The amendment is not an earmark, has no CBO scoring and would not reduce funds to other recipients.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Very truly yours,

Robert A. Scardelletti  
National President

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cc: The Honorable Mark Begich  
The Honorable Lisa Murkowski