



RRB News

U.S. Railroad Retirement Board

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President Appoints Railroad Retirement Board

President Donald J. Trump has appointed Erhard R. Chorlé to be the Chairman of the U.S. Railroad Retirement Board, Johnathan D. Bragg to be the Labor Member, and Thomas R. Jayne to be the Carrier Member. Their appointments to the three-member Board were confirmed by the Senate on January 2 and they each took the oath of office the week of February 4.

They will oversee the activities of the Chicago-based federal agency that pays nearly \$12.7 billion in railroad retirement and unemployment insurance benefits to about 565,000 railroad workers and their families. Two members of the Board are appointed to represent the interests of railroad labor and railroad employers, respectively, while the Chairman is appointed to represent the public interest.

At the time of his appointment, Mr. Chorlé was a partner with the Chicago law firm of Pedersen & Houpt in its corporate and business counseling practice group. He started his legal career in Illinois state government, serving as a Senior Assistant to the Director of Labor, Deputy Secretary of State, and State Securities Commissioner. He also served as Chairman of the Illinois State Board of Investment, which oversaw \$10 billion in investments for three state pension systems, and as Executive Assistant for Financial and Regulatory Affairs to former Governor Jim Edgar.

A resident of Chicago, Mr. Chorlé received his B.S. degree in commerce from DePaul University (1978) and a juris doctorate from The John Marshall Law School (1984).

Mr. Bragg was appointed on the recommendation of 13 national railway labor organizations. At the time of his appointment, he was a Vice President with the Brotherhood of Railroad Signalmen. In that capacity he also served as a permanent member of the National Railroad Adjustment Board, which adjudicates workplace disputes between railroad workers and their employers. Before becoming a Vice President with the union, Mr. Bragg also served as a Grand Lodge Representative and Director of Research.

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Mr. Bragg, a Virginia resident, had many family members work in the industry, and started his own railroad career 18 years ago with CSX Transportation, first as a freight conductor and later as a signalman. He became active in the signalmen's union, working his way up to serve as Local Chairman and as a Trustee of the Northeast General Committee before moving to the national office.

A Missouri native, Mr. Jayne's appointment was recommended by the Association of American Railroads and the American Short Line and Regional Railroad Association. He currently lives in Texas, where he was a Senior General Attorney for the BNSF Railway Company. In that position, he supervised tort litigation for the BNSF railway system, assisted with legislative and regulatory issues, and provided training and litigation advice.

Before joining BNSF, Mr. Jayne was an associate and partner in the St. Louis office of Thompson Coburn LLP, where he served as national counsel for clients in the transportation, manufacturing, banking, finance, insurance and construction industries. He received his B.A. degree in political science from Westminster College in Fulton, Missouri (1973) and his juris doctorate from the University of Missouri-Columbia School of Law (1976). He also clerked for U.S. District Judge H. Kenneth Wangelin in the Eastern District of Missouri.

Mr. Chorlé was confirmed to the balance of a term that expires in August 2022, and Mr. Jayne to the balance of a term that expires in August 2023. Mr. Bragg was confirmed to the balance of a term that expires in August 2019, as well as to a succeeding full term that expires in August 2024.

Mr. Bragg replaces Walter A. Barrows as Labor Member, while Mr. Jayne takes the place of Steven J. Anthony as Carrier Member, both of whom are retiring. Mr. Barrows first joined the Board in October 2011, while Mr. Anthony's tenure began in May 2014. The Board's previous Chairman, Michael S. Schwartz, retired in August 2015 after 12 years of service.

This is the first time that three new members have simultaneously entered on duty since the original Railroad Retirement Board assumed office in July 1934.

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