

# TTD NEWS RELEASE

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## Transportation Unions' Agenda Focuses on Job Creation, Safety and Appropriations *2016 Presidential Election Preparations Advance*

San Diego, CA — Transportation unions took aim at critical transportation appropriations battles pending in Washington and continued preparations to show their members and the public the stark choices voters will face in the presidential election.

"We are committed to countering the dangerous austerity agenda in certain corners of Congress that threatens to starve job creation investments in transportation," said Edward Wytkind, president of the Transportation Trades Department, AFL-CIO (TTD), following the winter meeting of the organization's 32-member Executive Committee, held yesterday. "We will also focus on critical safety issues plaguing our sector and fighting corporate efforts to weaken the job security and collective bargaining rights of transportation workers."

Executive Committee members discussed their priorities with U.S. Secretary of Transportation Anthony Foxx and Representative Peter DeFazio (D-OR), the lead Democrat on the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee. Charlie Cook, political analyst and editor and publisher of The Cook Political Report, provided a snapshot on the state of the presidential race and key U.S. Senate contests. AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka held a roundtable with transportation union leaders that focused on pending policy priorities and collective bargaining battles in 2016.

Transportation unions put their weight behind legislation that imposes stiffer criminal penalties on anyone who [assaults airline customer service representatives](#).

"We have seen an increase in attacks on gate and ticket agents – it is time for Congress and the airline companies to better protect these employees," Wytkind said.

TTD affiliates joined the growing chorus of opposition to [Canadian Pacific's attempted hostile takeover of Norfolk Southern](#), citing "the devastating impact these transactions can have on jobs, freight service and safety."

While praising Congress for boosting authorized funding levels for the Maritime Security Program (MSP), which provides vital sealift capacity to the Department of Defense, the Executive Committee vowed to push congressional appropriators and the Obama Administration to [fully fund the program](#).

"Funding MSP is vital to national security and it supports middle class U.S. mariner jobs," Wytkind said.

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Transportation union leaders also condemned underhanded attacks — disguised as measures to monitor the productivity of U.S. ports — on the [rights of longshore workers](#) to bargain for job security, and good wages and benefits.

“We will not let the world’s largest retailers and their army of lobbyists eviscerate the bargaining rights of the men and women in our ports,” Wytkind said.

The Executive Committee called for immediate funding of the federal-state compact to build-out [the Gateway Project](#). That project will fix a transportation crisis on the Northeast Corridor that promises to “reverberate across the entire economy” if Amtrak is forced to start shutting down century-old tunnels or severely deteriorated bridges in a region that supports 30 percent of the nation’s jobs.

Transportation unions also urged Congress to ensure that measures to boost aviation security [strike the appropriate balance](#) between protecting against terrorist threats and honoring the “legitimate rights of employees.”

Transportation unions focused on the upcoming presidential election with an agreement to work together in rolling out the views and records of the Republican and Democratic nominee for president.

“We are already seeing in this race a contest between candidates who want to massively rebuild our transportation system and expand our middle class, and those who will likely pursue a dangerous austerity agenda tantamount to economic retreat,” Wytkind added.

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*The Transportation Trades Department, AFL-CIO, provides a bold voice for workers in every mode of transportation devoted to protecting middle-class jobs, expanding collective bargaining, and ensuring modern, safe, and secure transportation operations and infrastructure. For more information, visit us at [www.ttd.org](http://www.ttd.org).*