

TTD NEWS RELEASE

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TTD Testifies Against Privatization of Amtrak

WASHINGTON, DC – The Transportation Trades Department, AFL-CIO (TTD) today, in testimony before a key congressional committee, called for full funding of Amtrak as the “centerpiece” of high speed rail and expressed strong opposition to privatizing the national passenger rail carrier.

“We are not opposed to private sector participation in passenger rail – in fact, there is plenty of private involvement today. But we are opposed to breaking up Amtrak,” said Edward Wytkind, TTD President. “Those who believe that privatization is a panacea ignore the fact that under this model, service would only be provided where it is profitable to do so for private investors.”

If entities other than Amtrak are going to provide passenger rail service, Wytkind reminded members of Congress that employee protections and major rail statutes must be applied to ensure a level playing field.

“It is wrong to allow private sector competition but then create an artificial cost advantage over Amtrak and its workers based on an ability to evade federal statutes,” Wytkind told the committee, adding that prevailing wage requirements must apply to all construction work funded with federal dollars.

Strong “Buy America” requirements require domestically manufactured rail equipment and raw materials. At a time when national unemployment stands at 9 percent, Wytkind said that “these investments should create middle-class manufacturing jobs here in the U.S.” along the entire supply chain.

“The rest of the world seems to understand that when it comes to transportation systems and infrastructure, you can’t cut your way to prosperity,” he added.

For TTD's written testimony, [click here](#).

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The Transportation Trades Department, AFL-CIO, represents 32 member unions in the aviation, rail, transit, trucking, highway, longshore, maritime and related industries. For more information, visit www.ttd.org.

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