



June 19, 2007

Oppose the Boozman Amendment – Support Amtrak and the Environment

Dear Representative,

On behalf of the Transportation Trades Department, AFL-CIO (TTD) and specifically our 10 rail unions who represent thousands of Amtrak, freight and commuter rail workers, I urge you to oppose the Boozman anti-Amtrak amendment during mark-up of the Transportation Energy Security and Climate Change Mitigation Act of 2007 (H.R. 2701).

The Boozman amendment would essentially eliminate Amtrak's preferential right of access to freight railroads' track. Amtrak depends on its access to freight tracks for nearly all short and long distance trains outside of the Northeast Corridor. The Boozman amendment would eliminate Amtrak's current access to these lines, create a burdensome and unworkable bureaucratic reporting scheme and pose a serious threat to the future of our national passenger rail system. Furthermore, the Boozman amendment would only exacerbate the delays of Amtrak's long-distance trains, a problem which has been a growing concern to members of this Committee and the public for several years.

Amtrak is a vital transportation link to thousands of communities and is an essential component of our national transportation system. Suspending Amtrak's right of access is not in keeping with the intent of this bill; it is bad energy policy and would have a detrimental effect on the environment.

The Boozman amendment threatens Amtrak's entire route structure and would have enormous negative consequences for our national passenger rail system, its workers and those who rely on passenger rail as a transportation option. I urge you to vote no on the Boozman amendment when the Committee considers H.R. 2701 on Wednesday.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Edward Wytkind", written over a white background.

Edward Wytkind
President

Transportation Trades Department, AFL-CIO

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