



June 26, 2007

The Honorable Corrine Brown  
Chairwoman  
House Railroads, Pipelines and Hazardous Materials Subcommittee  
589 Ford House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairwoman Brown:

On behalf of the Transportation Trades Department, AFL-CIO (TTD) and specifically the 10 member unions of our Rail Labor Division, I am writing to express our outrage and growing frustration with the state of labor-management relations at Amtrak and to ask for your intervention in resolving this problem. For our national passenger rail system to thrive, front-line workers must be treated with respect, compensated fairly and considered partners in the delivery of safe and efficient service. Quite frankly, that is not happening today and in fact Amtrak's negotiators continue to make a mockery of the collective bargaining process.

As you know, most of Amtrak's unionized workforce is approaching eight years without updated contracts. Meanwhile, a majority of the National Mediation Board continues to ignore its obligation to advance the bargaining process and plays into Amtrak's stonewalling tactics.

Amtrak has shown no willingness to engage in true collective bargaining and has simply used the uncertainty of federal funding as a strategic ploy to evade its obligations. With that as a backdrop, we find Amtrak's recent plan to give certain executives and managers a 10 percent salary increase based on geographic location and "hard to fill" positions a serious breach of good faith and a demonstration of the company's disregard for its own employees. In addition to this premium pay plan, Amtrak management has already received 14.2 percent wage increases since 2003.

Given the state of affairs at Amtrak and specifically the company's intransigence at the bargaining table, this special management compensation plan is a slap in the face to Amtrak's unionized workers.

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While being denied any general wage increase for more than seven years, Amtrak employees have continued to keep the nation's passenger rail system running in the face of anemic federal resources, hostile Administration policies and direct attacks from the company's own Board of Directors. Announcing raises for management only reveals how out of touch Amtrak is with its own employees who continue to see the value of their paychecks plummet. The average Amtrak worker has seen his or her paycheck grow by about \$1.61 over seven years. And today, Amtrak employees earn 20-40 percent less than their counterparts employed at the nation's freight and commuter rail carriers.

It is time for Congress to step in. It is not enough to simply fund Amtrak year after year. Instead, Congress must use its legislative and oversight powers forcefully, and compel Amtrak to reach fair and voluntary agreements with its employees and their unions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Edward Wytkind". The signature is stylized with several loops and a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Edward Wytkind  
President