



A bold voice for transportation workers

February 2, 2012

***Vote Yes on Carnahan Amendment #51
Protect the Jobs of Over 2000 Amtrak Workers***

Dear Representative,

I am writing to urge a YES vote on the Carnahan amendment to H.R. 7 that would stop the firing of more than 2,000 Amtrak workers that provide food and beverage service to millions of passengers nationwide. This amendment would remove a heavy handed mandate tucked away in the bill that forces Amtrak – through a mandatory process managed by the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) – to contract out its food services.

In addition to serving Amtrak customers, these Amtrak employees serve as first-responders in the event of accidents or incidents on trains. That is why these skilled workers undergo emergency service training under federal rail safety rules. Following a recent Amtrak accident in Nevada, the food service employees on-board were praised for their efforts in evacuating and caring for passengers.

Access to food and beverage, in an Amtrak café or dining car, is an essential part of the passenger rail product and the customer experience on most Amtrak routes. Amtrak currently outsources its Commissary, Logistics and Supply Chain operations, but F&B service remains in-house and accounts for about 12 percent of Amtrak's workforce. This legislation, however, would negate existing collective bargaining agreements for F&B service workers by holding competitions for work using conditions that make it impossible for Amtrak's in-house staff to win the bids. This would force the railroad to fire over 2,000 employees and give away the work of Amtrak workers to the lowest bidder.

Additionally, not only does the bill amend the requirement that Amtrak food and beverage service be revenue neutral, but it allows Amtrak appropriations to be used to cover a private contractor's losses. In effect, this would prohibit Amtrak from losing money on food and beverage service, but force the railroad to use its federal funding to subsidize a private contractor's losses. This giveaway to private interests must be removed from H.R. 7.

This provision in H.R. 7 sacrifices good-paying jobs in order to hand out contracts to private companies at the expense of the taxpayer. For these reasons, I urge you to vote for Rep. Carnahan's amendment #51.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Edward Wytkind', written over a light blue horizontal line.

Edward Wytkind
President

Transportation Trades Department, AFL-CIO

888 16th Street NW / Suite 650 / Washington DC 20006

Tel:202.628.9262 / Fax:202.628.0391 / www.ttd.org

Edward Wytkind, President / Larry I. Willis, Secretary-Treasurer

