



June 13, 2006

**Support the LaTourette-Oberstar Amendment
Protect Amtrak**

Dear Representative:

On behalf of the Transportation Trades Department, AFL-CIO (TTD) I urge you to support the LaTourette-Oberstar amendment to H.R. 5576 (Transportation-Treasury-HUD Appropriations bill) to save our national passenger rail system. The LaTourette-Oberstar amendment would increase funding for Amtrak by \$214 million.

The \$900 million included in the Committee bill would shut down our national passenger rail system, strand 25 million passengers and add nearly 20,000 workers to the unemployment line. Simply put, if funding is not increased dramatically, Amtrak will be out of business and passengers, states and workers will pay the price. While the LaTourette-Oberstar amendment will not provide Amtrak with the full cash infusion it needs to return to a state of good repair, it is a step in the right direction and deserves your support. We pledge to work with Congress and other stakeholders to pass a comprehensive multi-year authorization bill for passenger rail. Until that time, however, Amtrak deserves adequate funding.

Amtrak is a vital transportation link to thousands of communities and is an essential component of our national transportation system. The carrier must be supported, not dismantled or starved into bankruptcy. It is not an entity that can somehow "turn a profit" – instead it must be seen as an integral public transportation service that needs and deserves federal financial support to operate safely and efficiently.

I urge you to support the LaTourette-Oberstar amendment that will help maintain our national passenger rail system.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Edward Wytkind", is written over a horizontal line.

Edward Wytkind
President

Transportation Trades Department, AFL-CIO

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