

# TTD NEWS RELEASE

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## Transportation Spending: Good for Workers, Good for America

ORLANDO, FL—Leaders from 32 transportation unions gathered here to forge a transportation investment, jobs and safety agenda vital to a strong industry and thriving economy.

“The old playbook in Washington has been tossed out by many lawmakers, and bipartisan support traditionally seen for transportation jobs bills that fuel the economy is evaporating,” Edward Wytkind, president of the Transportation Trades Department, AFL-CIO (TTD) told attendees at the Annual Winter Executive Committee Meeting. “With surface transportation bills pending in the House of Representatives and the Senate impacting workers, it is crucial that this vital jobs legislation not be hijacked by irresponsible election-year tactics.”

AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka, a former TTD Executive Committee member, addressed the gathering, saying, “Infrastructure funding is the best jobs bill we could have. It will put people to work quicker than anything else we can do.” Trumka said federal investments to improve our transportation system and create jobs also rebuild cities and increase badly depleted tax revenues. “It’s real simple – America prospers when America works.”

The Executive Committee pledged its full support to the Transport Workers Union in its battle to save thousands of jobs at American Airlines, which has been in bankruptcy since November.

“We will stand with TWU members in their fight to preserve middle-class jobs and to oppose efforts by American to use the bankruptcy process to outsource high-skill airline mechanics jobs overseas,” Wytkind said.

The Executive Committee also vowed action on a number of major initiatives including the need to bolster federal Buy America policy, combat chronic fatigue among flight crews, slow the epidemic of aircraft maintenance outsourcing, and boost investment in U.S. maritime transportation.

**Buy America:** TTD members want strong domestic content standards and improvements to Buy America laws to ensure that federal investments made in U.S. transportation support domestic manufacturing. In this struggling economy, to maximize the impact of these federal dollars, it makes sense that we use American-made steel, iron and manufactured goods. Transportation and Infrastructure Committee Ranking Member Nick Rahall (D-WV) has introduced the strongest and most comprehensive Buy America legislation to date that we fully endorse. The *Invest in American Jobs Act* (H.R.3533) strengthens, harmonizes and appropriately expands existing Buy America provisions to ensure that American dollars are supporting American jobs.

**Aircraft Maintenance Outsourcing:** If we are serious about rebuilding a middle class in this country by keeping jobs from going overseas, we must eliminate perverse incentives for airlines

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to outsource aircraft maintenance. We also must ensure that foreign repair stations – certified by our government – are held to the same high standards as those found in the U.S. While more than 70 percent of heavy maintenance is now outsourced by our airlines, the FAA legislation imposes new mandates that will strengthen inspection and drug testing requirements.

**Crewmember fatigue:** The FAA, on Dec. 21, 2011, issued new rules on airline pilot flight- and duty-time limitations and minimum rest requirements. These science-based rules mark a major step forward in making air travel safer. We are disappointed, however, that cargo carriers are exempt from the regulations. We are pleased that DOT Secretary Ray LaHood has committed to bringing the various parties within the cargo industry together to extend and implement uniform pilot safety standards. We also endorse H.R.3824 by Rep. Mazie Hirono (D-HI), which would require a rulemaking on cabin crew fatigue.

**Maritime Funding:** We believe that a strong maritime industry and U.S.-flag fleet is critical to our economic and national security interests. Unfortunately, neither the House nor the Senate surface transportation reauthorization bill included a substantial maritime title. This is a missed opportunity to acknowledge the importance of maritime to the nation and address the needs of America's waterborne transportation system and its employees. Last year Reps. Charles Boustany (R-LA) and Joe Courtney (D-CT) introduced the RAMP Act (H.R.104) – bi-partisan legislation that would ensure the funds collected under the HMT are in fact used for their intended purpose. A companion bill, the Harbor Maintenance Act (S.412), has been introduced by Sens. Carl Levin (D-MI) and Kay Bailey Hutchison (R-TX). We support these bills and urge Congress to include them in the pending surface transportation reauthorization or to find another path forward toward enacting these reforms into law.

To read the four policy statements in full, please visit [TTD.org](http://TTD.org)'s policy library.

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*The Transportation Trades Department, AFL-CIO, represents 32 member unions in the aviation, rail, transit, motor carrier, highway, longshore, maritime and related industries. For more information, visit us at [www.ttd.org](http://www.ttd.org) or on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).*