



A bold voice for transportation workers

June 27, 2012

***Vote No on Flake Amendment
Protect Amtrak Service & Jobs***

Dear Representative:

On behalf of the Transportation Trades Department, AFL-CIO (TTD), I urge you to oppose an amendment expected to be offered by Rep. Flake to the T-HUD Appropriations bill (H.R. 5972). This amendment would prevent Amtrak from using any of its funding for food and beverage services, forcing the railroad to eliminate the jobs of over 2,000 dedicated employees.

Access to food and beverage, in an Amtrak café or dining car, is an essential part of the passenger rail product and the consumer experience on most Amtrak routes. Rep. Flake's amendment is an ideological-driven attempt to micromanage Amtrak's operations that would only serve to make it more difficult for the carrier to succeed. The amendment also fails to recognize that Amtrak has made significant strides in improving food and beverage operations and the carrier's record ridership numbers are due in part to the overall customer service experience that exists today. Dictating how Amtrak operates damages the passenger carrier's ability to provide the type and levels of services that customers demand and have come to expect.

In addition to serving Amtrak customers, the employees threatened by this amendment play a critical role in the safety of all passengers. As the employees likely to be first on scene in the event of an accident, incident or security breach, these skilled workers undergo emergency service training under federal rail safety rules. In fact, following an Amtrak accident last year in Nevada, the food service employees on-board were praised for their efforts in evacuating and caring for passengers. In other words, these workers are on the front-lines of ensuring the safety of passengers.

Rep. Flake's amendment is part of an ideologically motivated campaign to undermine Amtrak and hollow out its ability to provide national passenger rail service. Congress should dismiss this reckless proposal and instead provide Amtrak with the long-term resources and stability it needs to provide first-class passenger rail service.

I urge you to vote against Rep. Flake's amendment. Amtrak's workers and the millions of passengers who rely on Amtrak's passenger rail services are counting on your support.

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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