



*A bold voice for transportation workers*

June 10, 2014

**Vote No on Sessions Amtrak Amendment to T-HUD Appropriations Bill**

Dear Representative:

On behalf of the Transportation Trades Department, AFL-CIO (TTD), I urge you to vote NO on an amendment offered by Rep. Sessions to the pending FY 15 T-HUD bill (H.R. 4745). This amendment would prohibit funds from going to any Amtrak route which costs exceed two times its revenue, a clear attack on Amtrak's long-distance routes which serve as a key component in our national transportation system.

Our nation needs a diversified transportation network and Amtrak's long-distance trains are a crucial part of this system. To expect Amtrak to operate every route at a profit is to ignore the very nature of intercity passenger rail. No country has created an efficient national passenger rail system without large-scale public funding and extensive government oversight. Financial losses on these routes can be attributed in part to the anemic funding Amtrak receives which prevents long-distance routes from having the number of frequencies and improved infrastructure needed to attract a larger number of passengers.

Despite Amtrak's inability to modernize its system, due to lack of funding, ridership on long-distance routes has grown by roughly 20 percent since 1998 and, in FY 2013, reached its highest point in twenty years with 4.8 million passengers. Long-distance routes also provide transportation to underserved consumers, including the elderly and riders with disabilities.

Please support Amtrak's national system as well as the local and regional economies that rely on long-distance routes by opposing Rep. Session's amendment.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Edward Wytkind', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Edward Wytkind  
President

**Transportation Trades Department, AFL-CIO**

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