

TTD NEWS RELEASE

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Statement on Senate Amtrak Reauthorization Bill

Washington, DC — Edward Wytkind, president of the Transportation Trades Department, AFL-CIO (TTD), issues this statement on the consideration of the Amtrak Reauthorization bill:

“We applaud Senators Roger Wicker and Cory Booker for working in a bipartisan fashion to craft a sensible Amtrak Reauthorization bill that will be considered by the Commerce Committee today. The bill proposed by Wicker and Booker provides Amtrak with higher funding levels than the bill passed by the House, and includes reforms to the rail financing program that meet pressing needs to replace 100-year-old rail tunnels and other major infrastructure projects.

“While we strongly support these provisions, we remain concerned that the Wicker-Booker bill allows entities other than Amtrak to bid on service without full assurances that these rail operators will be covered by the same rail labor laws Amtrak follows today. If entities other than Amtrak are going to compete for business in the intercity passenger rail sector, then they should be required to comply with the same rail labor statutes and not be permitted to gain a competitive advantage at the expense of rail employees.

“While we are pleased that the bill contains provisions to bolster rail safety, we believe this legislation misses the chance to advance a number of other common sense [reforms](#) that will make rail transportation safer. We also reject efforts to use this bill to mandate inward-facing cameras without basic privacy and anti-harassment protections for workers who spend up to 70 hours a week in locomotive cabs.

“We look forward to working with lawmakers to address these shortcomings and to craft a final bill that ensures our nation’s passenger rail system receives the funding and support needed to make it an engine for good jobs, mobility and strong economic growth.”

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The Transportation Trades Department, AFL-CIO, provides a bold voice for workers in every mode of transportation devoted to protecting middle-class jobs, expanding collective bargaining, and ensuring modern, safe, and secure transportation operations and infrastructure. For more information, visit us at www.ttd.org.

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