



A bold voice for transportation workers

July 28, 2020

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker of the House
United States House of Representatives
H-232, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
Minority Leader
United States House of Representatives
H-204, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader
United States Senate
S-230, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Chuck Schumer
Minority Leader
United States Senate
S-221, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Speaker Pelosi, Leader McConnell, Leader McCarthy, and Leader Schumer:

As Congress continues to negotiate the terms of its next COVID-19 relief package, we call on you to include emergency supplemental funding to preserve Amtrak, the critical services it provides, and the livelihoods of its employees. Similar to other modes of passenger transportation, Amtrak has seen ridership fall as much as 95% on certain routes over the course of the pandemic. In response, Congress wisely provided critical financial assistance to the carrier through the CARES Act.

Unfortunately, the ongoing impacts of the pandemic have denied Amtrak the revenue it requires to operate a national intercity passenger rail service and continued financial assistance is necessary. Without additional support, the viability of Amtrak is unequivocally at risk. To this end, we request that Congress include \$4.5 billion in supplementary funding in its next COVID relief package. These funds will allow Amtrak to remain operational, to keep its dedicated workforce connected to wages and benefits like healthcare, and prevent the need for disastrous service cuts on the National Network.

The result of not providing this level of funding will be dire. [The most recent request presented by Amtrak is deeply insufficient](#), and by its own admission its plan will send thousands of employees, up to 20% of its workforce, to the unemployment lines beginning on October 1. Further, this plan would reduce the frequency of many of Amtrak's long distance routes from daily to three times a week. These routes serve small towns and rural communities who depend on the daily service Amtrak provides and will not operate on full schedules without financial support and the workforce required to operate them.

Transportation Trades Department, AFL-CIO

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Larry I. Willis, President / Greg Regan, Secretary-Treasurer

Further, while we strongly support continued assistance for Amtrak, it is critical that these funds are used to benefit Amtrak's employees and the travelling public. We therefore urge that any supplementary funding provided to Amtrak be made contingent on prohibitions against using the funds to furlough employees or reduce service and route frequencies.

On behalf of Amtrak's workforce, we call on you to take decisive action to protect Amtrak workers, and the integrity of the service they provide, to overcome the current crisis and safeguard the future of intercity passenger rail service, and we thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Larry I. Willis". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Larry I. Willis
President