



Railroad Workers United

Solidarity • Unity • Democracy

The Rank & File in Action!

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Dear Friends and Fellow Workers:

In face of the degeneration of the rail system in the last decade, and after more than a decade of discussion and debate on the question, Railroad Workers United (RWU) has taken a position in support of public ownership of the rail system in the United States. (see Resolution attached). We ask you to consider doing the same, and announce your organization's support for rail public ownership.

While the rail industry has been incapable of expansion in the last generation and has become more and more fixated on the Operating Ratio to the detriment of all other metrics of success, Precision Scheduled Railroading (PSR) has escalated this irresponsible trajectory to the detriment of shippers, passengers, commuters, trackside communities, and workers. On-time performance is suffering, and shipper complaints are at all-time highs. Passenger trains are chronically late, commuter services are threatened, and the rail industry is hostile to practically any passenger train expansion. The workforce has been decimated, as jobs have been eliminated, consolidated, and contracted out, ushering in a new previously unheard-of era where workers can neither be recruited nor retained. Locomotive, rail car, and infrastructure maintenance has been cut back. Health and safety has been put at risk. Morale is at an all-time low. The debacle in national contract bargaining last Fall saw the carriers – after decades of record profits and record low Operating Ratios – refusing to make even the slightest concessions to the workers who have made them their riches.

Since the North American private rail industry has shown itself incapable of doing the job, it is time for this invaluable transportation infrastructure – like the other transport modes – to be brought under public ownership. During WWI, the railroads in the U.S. were in fact temporarily placed under public ownership and control. All rail workers of all crafts and unions supported (unsuccessfully) keeping them in public hands once the war ended, and voted overwhelmingly to keep them in public hands. Perhaps it is time once again to put an end to the profiteering, pillaging, and irresponsibility of the Class One carriers. Railroad workers are in a historic position to take the lead and push for a new fresh beginning for a vibrant and expanding, innovative and creative national rail industry to properly handle the nation's freight and passengers.

Please join us in this historic endeavor. See the adjoining RWU Resolution in Support of Public Ownership of the Railroads, along with a sample Statement from the United Electrical (UE). If your organization would like to take a stand for public ownership of the nation's rail system, please fill out the attached form and email it in to RWU. We will add your organization to the list. Finally, please forward this letter to others who may be interested in doing the same. Thank you!

In solidarity,

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