



Coordinated Bargaining Coalition welcomes face-to-face mediation over national contract negotiations

CLEVELAND, Ohio (May 20, 2022) — The Coordinated Bargaining Coalition (CBC) Rail Labor Unions* are preparing for in-person mediation sessions before the National Mediation Board (NMB) in Washington D.C., May 24-26. The Unions hope this will help to settle their ongoing national contract dispute.

After more than two years of bargaining, which can only be described as unproductive due to the carriers’ refusal to make or accept any worthwhile offers of settlement, negotiations entered the mediation process in January 2022.

“We are determined to keep this process moving as prescribed by the Railway Labor Act,” the CBC Chiefs said in a joint statement. “In recent weeks, the Surface Transportation Board has held hearings to investigate freight rail service meltdowns. Members of Congress from both sides of the aisle have expressed concern about a rail workforce that is understaffed and fatigued. To further raise the public’s concern about these issues, our members have held public protests at shareholders’ meetings. Just as they have failed in their responsibility to transport goods and materials for shippers in a timely manner, the railroads refuse to take the contract negotiating process seriously. Our members deserve better, and they have earned the right to a contract that has substantial wage increases and no concessions to their healthcare coverage.”

Supply-chain disruptions worsened by the so-called Precision Scheduled Railroading (PSR) operating scheme and the carriers’ massive cuts to the labor force have contributed to inflation, empty shelves and higher prices. While Class I railroads continue to reap record profits in the last few years, rail workers who have transported goods and provided services all through the coronavirus pandemic have not seen their wages increase since July 2019.

“If the railroads intend to settle this round of bargaining with a voluntary agreement, as they claim, they must promptly come to the table and meaningfully engage with all of Rail Labor,” the presidents said. “Proper closure of this round of bargaining will not only benefit our hardworking members and their families; it will benefit our entire Nation by helping to alleviate the unprecedented resignations and staffing shortages, which are contributing to rising costs and supply chain issues. The time has come for our Nation’s railroads to be held accountable for their actions, and reconcile the long-term effects of their greed.”

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**The unions comprising the Coordinated Bargaining Coalition are: the American Train Dispatchers Association (ATDA); the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen / Teamsters Rail Conference*

(BLET); the Brotherhood of Railroad Signalmen (BRS); the International Association of Machinists (IAM); the International Brotherhood of Boilermakers (IBB); the National Conference of Firemen & Oilers/SEIU (NCFO); the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW); the Transport Workers Union of America (TWU); the Transportation Communications Union / IAM (TCU), including TCU's Brotherhood Railway Carmen Division (BRC); and the Transportation Division of the International Association of Sheet Metal, Air, Rail, and Transportation Workers (SMART-TD).

Collectively, the CBC unions represent more than 105,000 railroad workers covered by the various organizations' national agreements, and comprise over 80% of the workforce who will be impacted by this round of negotiations.