

October 1, 2003

Mr. Freddie Simpson
President
BMW
20300 Civic Center Drive, Ste. 320
Southfield, Michigan 48076

Mr. Don Hahs
President
BLE
1370 Ontario Street
Cleveland, Ohio 44113

Dear Brothers Simpson and Hahs:

I am deeply concerned about the future of Amtrak and its workers. Amtrak's president has announced that Amtrak needs \$1.8 billion to maintain its operations, and that without that level of funding, Amtrak will be forced to shut down, eliminating thousands of good, union jobs, which are becoming more and more difficult to find in the current economic climate.

The U.S. House of Representatives had a chance to save Amtrak, but at the behest of President Bush, the House sentenced Amtrak to death when it provided just \$900 million in its FY2004 Transportation Appropriations bill – half of what Amtrak and its workers need to survive. Worst of all, the Republican Leadership hammered the nails in the coffin when they used every procedural gimmick available to block a vote on additional funding. Meanwhile, the Senate committee-passed bill provides \$1.35 billion for Amtrak. While this is a step in the right direction, it is still far short of the \$1.8 billion that Amtrak requires. This is yet another example of the 30 years of neglect that has plagued Amtrak and forced its workers to make sacrifice after sacrifice just to keep its trains running.

It seems to me that Congress and the American people have taken Amtrak and its workers for granted, but together we can show the nation what it would be like without national passenger rail service. I understand that your members plan to withdraw service from Amtrak on October 3, 2003. On behalf of 1.4 million Teamster working families, whose livelihoods often depend on reliable, efficient

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national passenger rail service, I support your efforts and would like to offer our union's assistance as you see fit. It is my hope that your actions will serve as a wakeup call to all our elected leaders and the American public that rail service is vital to our nation's economy and that the federal government must make the proper long-term investments in Amtrak to ensure that this resource is available for the American people.

Please let me know how I can be of further assistance. In the interim, I am sending a TITAN message to all Teamster local union officials today to urge their support of the October 3rd walkout. In addition, I will send an Update on Congress to all of our local unions urging our members to call their Representatives and Senators to tell them to give Amtrak the funds it needs to maintain and improve its system. We have already sent a letter to the House and Senate with a similar message, which I have forwarded to your offices.

Together, we can fight to keep Amtrak alive!

Fraternally,

James P. Hoffa
General President

JPH/je