

## A MESSAGE FROM THE NATIONAL LEGISLATIVE DIRECTOR

On June 29, 2005, the U.S. House of Representatives approved the amendments to restore Amtrak funding by a vote of 269-152. The approval would not have happened without the emails, phone calls, and faxes. The amazing part of this whole process was the 73 Republican votes in favor of passage. Notable amongst the 73 Republican votes was that 9 of them came out of the State of Florida. Because of the persistence, dedication and hard work of the Washington, DC office, active State Directors, the retirees and the active Auxiliary members we accomplished something that has never been done before. The 9 votes from Florida is testimony to the effectiveness of grass root efforts in that state.

Soon, the bill will go to the Senate for their consideration and we must once again make those calls, send those emails and faxes to let your Senators know they need to provide full funding for Amtrak. The thousands of phone calls and e-mails from UTU members were crucial to the success of this amendment. They will be again.

If Amtrak is not funded the **full** \$1.2 billion, Amtrak President David Gunn will immediately shut down operations, and if Amtrak operations are shut down:

- up to 4,000 UTU jobs could be lost
- Railroad Retirement could lose 10% of its funding
- Railroad Retirement could face bankruptcy in the future
- Freight rail jobs could be lost
- Some freight would likely be diverted to trucks

Once again, we must convince our Senators to *fully fund* Amtrak.

If you need information on your Senate members, go the home page of

[www.utu.org](http://www.utu.org), look to the left column, click on "Washington Updates" and then on "Contacting the Congress." Then click on your state. These are the telephone numbers and e-mail addresses you use. If you don't have email access, you can obtain the information from your UTU and Auxiliary State Directors, the UTU Legislative Office or myself.

Our UTU National Legislative Director, James Brunkenhoefer said, "The calls and e-mails must be made quickly, and making multiple phone calls and sending multiple e-mail messages will be especially helpful."

### **REMEMBER**

1. Contribute to **UTU PAC** - *The best way to help elect representatives that understand the concerns of UTU members.*
2. Start communicating your message.
3. Have your congressional delegation information handy and ready.
4. Gather contact information on Lodge members.
5. Recruit , recruit, recruit

### ***WHERE WE ARE ACTIVE..... WE ARE EFFECTIVE***

Yours in Sisterly Love,

***Charlie Belden***

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