

COORDINATED BARGAINING GROUP

PRESS RELEASE



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: NOVEMBER 10, 2017

Coordinated Bargaining Group Update To All Members

As previously announced on October 6, 2017, the six Rail Unions comprising the Coordinated Bargaining Group (CBG) have reached a Tentative National Agreement with the Nation's Freight Rail Carriers. As this Update goes to press, members of all CBG Unions have either received their ballots, or soon will. All members are encouraged to review the Tentative Agreement and compare those terms and conditions to the other options before us and participate in your future by casting your vote.

As additional information to help your review, on November 2, 2017, the United States Senate confirmed two Republican nominees to serve as members of the National Mediation Board. This three-person Board is now controlled by a Republican majority, and it is the Government Agency that manages the mediation process that all Rail Labor Unions are currently involved in, pursuant to the Railway Labor Act. The National Mediation Board, in concert with the White House, will determine when the parties have officially reached an impasse, and will manage any potential Presidential Emergency Board activities for those Unions and Rail Carriers that do not reach a voluntary settlement. In addition, the Rail Unions of the CBG must again condemn the interference by the Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Employees (BMWE) in our ratification processes. These unprecedented attacks have escalated to a series of false accusations against the CBG Unions, and are clearly intended to harm our ratification of the Tentative Agreement. These slanderous accusations are without merit and in direct response to the CBG's refusal to embrace BMWE's proposals to change the Health and Welfare plan. BMWE, having failed to reach a voluntary agreement and in fact having given up on further negotiations, is now seeking to place your work rules and health care on the table as leverage for their benefit at a Presidential Emergency Board and ultimately in front of the United States Congress.

Your negotiating team and the affected General Chairmen of the CBG Organizations have considered all options and determined, unanimously, that the health care scheme proposed by BMWE is not in the best interest of our members even if the railroads were agreeable to such a plan (and there is no indication that the railroads are acceptable to the scheme). The BMWE proposal is just a proposal, one that no Rail Union outside of the BMWE coalition has publicly agreed to endorse. On the other hand, the agreement proposed by the CBG negotiators is real — it includes terms and conditions that protect our work rules, provides for minimal increases in health care that are more than offset by wage increases that are over twice the rate of inflation, with reasonable out-of-pocket maximums that protect our members from the impact of catastrophic medical events.

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These are the facts; don't be misled by any misrepresentations. We respect the right of any Organization to negotiate in the best interests of its members, and BMW is certainly free to pursue any avenue it believes best, including denying their members the opportunity to vote on their future. But we also reject any Organization's attempt to interfere in the sacred democratic process of those who have reached a voluntary agreement, especially when our elected representatives have unanimously endorsed the proposed agreement and have chosen to allow our members to cast a vote on their own future.

Refraining from attacking another Union in the performance of its negotiating obligations is a core principle of Trade Unionism. The Union interfering in your ratification process does not have the same exposure to significant work rules changes that you do and has publicly stated that it does not care if your work rules are eliminated. The leaders of that Union at the highest level have been repeatedly asked to stay out of our ratification process, and they have refused. This is the opposite of true Brotherhood; don't be conned by their anti-union activities. Take the time to understand all your options and the risks associated with each, and then be sure to participate by voting in your ratification process, a process that the interfering Union does not think you are entitled to.

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The Coordinated Bargaining Group is comprised of six unions: the American Train Dispatchers Association; the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen (a Division of the Rail Conference of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters); the Brotherhood of Railroad Signalmen; the International Brotherhood of Boilermakers, Iron Ship Builders, Blacksmiths, Forgers, and Helpers; the National Conference of Firemen and Oilers / SEIU; and the Transportation Division of the International Association of Sheet Metal, Air, Rail and Transportation Workers.

Collectively, the CBG unions represent more than 85,000 railroad workers covered by the various organizations' national agreements, and comprise over 58% of the workforce that will be impacted by the outcome of the current bargaining round.