

**Rail Labor Division**



May 4, 2020

The Honorable Mitch McConnell  
U.S. Senate  
317 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
U.S. House of Representatives  
1236 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Chuck Schumer  
U.S. Senate  
322 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy  
U.S. House of Representatives  
2468 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Majority Leader McConnell, Speaker Pelosi, Minority Leader Schumer, and Minority Leader McCarthy:

On behalf of the Rail Labor Division of the Transportation Trades Department, AFL-CIO, the American Short Line and Regional Railroad Association, the Association of American Railroads, and the Teamsters Rail Conference, we thank the U.S. House of Representatives and U.S. Senate for passage of the CARES Act. We are especially appreciative of your efforts to ensure that railroad workers, through Railroad Unemployment Insurance Act (RUIA) enhancements, were provided similar protections and benefits as other hardworking Americans during this pandemic.

As Congress considers additional legislative packages to address the ongoing COVID-19 crisis, we urge you to continue providing parity in unemployment and sickness benefits for railroad workers. Additionally, continued investment in the Railroad Retirement Board (RRB) is critical to ensure RUIA benefits and protections can be delivered in an expeditious manner during this extraordinary time. Specifically, we respectfully request:

- An additional \$11.5 million in administrative funds to support the Agency as it continues in this expanded telework posture to aid in the move toward paperless processing, self-service portals, and other critical IT enhancements; and
- The removal of RUIA from the effects of sequester, which causes an artificial reduction in unemployment benefits, below statutorily provided amounts. This would not result in an adverse impact on the federal budget. State-administered UI programs are not subject to this reduction.

Your continued support for the men and women who are on the frontlines moving America's essential goods is greatly appreciated. Thank you for your consideration of these important requests.