

January 22, 2015

Sisters and Brothers,

As you all know, our first negotiating session with the nation's freight railroads (National Negotiations) was held last Tuesday, January 14th. Each organization in our coalition was represented-TCU, BRC, IAM, and TWU.

The session began with of a brief discussion about our respective Section Six notices. The Carriers followed that up with a brief Health and Welfare presentation addressing the state of Health and Welfare plans amongst major non-railroad corporations in the US. The gist of their presentation was to let us know how much the Affordable Care Act was costing them since its inception, what they projected future plan costs to be because of the Act, and how much more employees of other major U.S. corporations contribute to their overall H & W costs than our members contribute. It's quite obvious, and something we've been preparing for all along, that their main concern this round will be Health and Welfare issues. Our coalition will have their presentation reviewed by our Health and Welfare consultant and be prepared to respond at our next session.

Future negotiating sessions have been scheduled as follows:

Tuesday and Wednesday March 3rd& 4th.

Tuesday and Wednesday March 24th & 25th.

On March 3rd the Carriers will present us with a more detailed plan as to where they want to go on Health and Welfare issues. We will have our H & W consultant with us at the meetings on the 3rd and 4th to listen to their presentation and review the issues with us in private. We will then decide where to proceed from there.

As to Shop Craft specific issues, at the next meeting the Shop Craft unions in our coalition will determine, along with the companies, how to move forward on them.

On a final note, we have been informed that the other Rail Labor Organizations will also be in coalition bargaining with the Carriers as follows:

BMW & SMART Sheet Metal Workers.

SMART UTU, BRS, BLE, ATDA, B & B & F & O.

Unfortunately things move fairly slow in these negotiations. Unless something drastic happens on March 3rd and 4th, we will update you again following our meetings on the 24th and 25th.

Please don't hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.

Fraternally,

Bill Bohne, Jr.
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