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Senator Jerry Petrowski
Room 123 South
State Capitol
Madison, WI 53707-7882

Re: Impact of "Right-to-Work" Legislation on Federal Transit Funding

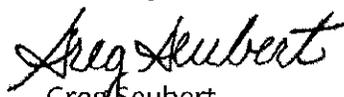
Dear Senator Petrowski:

Wisconsin's public transit systems are financed, in part, by federal funds. To remain eligible for those funds, transit systems must comply with employee labor protection requirements contained in Section 13(c) of the Urban Mass Transportation Act of 1964. The requirements include the preserving of employee rights and benefits; continuing of their collective bargaining rights; and protecting them against a worsening of their employment conditions. Transit systems must certify their compliance with these requirements each time they submit a grant application. If either the U.S. Department of Labor or the national or international union representing the employees deems that transit worker rights have been diminished or their position worsened, funding is denied until the issues in question are resolved.

Proposed "right-to-work" legislation will diminish collective bargaining rights and modify conditions of employment for Wisconsin workers. The State of Wisconsin has the authority to implement such changes, but if they pertain to federally funded transit workers, transit systems will be forced to violate Section 13(c) requirements and they will become ineligible for federal transit funds as a consequence. Although news reports have suggested that the proposed bill will pertain solely to private sector businesses and employees, it is important to note that many Wisconsin transit workers are private sector employees. Transit systems in Milwaukee, Waukesha and Racine are operated by private firms and their bus operators, maintenance personnel, etc. are employees of the private firm.

Transit systems in Wisconsin simply cannot survive if they become ineligible for federal transit funds. Remaining state and local funds would be insufficient to continue operations and levy limits would prevent the dedication of additional local funds to make up the difference. It is for this reason that federally funded transit workers must be provided an exemption from any "right-to-work" legislation. It is for this same reason that federally funded transit workers are exempt from Act 10.

Sincerely,


Greg Seubert
Transit Director