



October 13, 2021

Dear President Simpson,

As you are aware, the COVID-19 Vaccination Mandates issued by many employers are causing grave concerns to many working-class Americans in nearly every industry across this country, including our own. With recent Covid Vaccine Mandates being applied on the Class 1 Railroads such as Amtrak, Union Pacific, and smaller properties where we have representational rights for our members (*likely more properties will follow suit*), this has become the single most pressing issue for our membership. The members have sought our formal position and continually ask, "*what is their Union doing to address this issue.*" Put another way, every one of our respective offices, cell phones, emails, and other means of communication have been inundated with calls from concerned members worried about their family's future and ability to provide. As trade unionists, they have elected all of us to protect their interests and expect we deliver on our oaths of office.

Since these mandates have been announced and/or implemented, many of us have already written letters to the respective Carriers outlining our concerns and opposition to forced mandates for vaccinations as a condition of employment. Policies, such as Amtrak's Covid vaccine Mandate, offer no alternatives for being unvaccinated (i.e., weekly testing), which is unreasonable. The Carrier's actions violate "status quo" provisions of the RLA by not maintaining the terms of the existing contract during negotiations. Under any other circumstance where the Carrier unilaterally implements policies affecting our members' general working conditions, including conditions of employment, we as an Organization have maintained that the Carriers are required to bargain under the Railway Labor Act to do so. Otherwise, we collectively view it as illegal and believe we should consider all legal remedies should the Carriers refuse to engage in good-faith bargaining. With God and the courts willing, this would be a red carpet to the picket line in any other scenario, only as a last resort.

We are kindly asking you to support the undersigned Federations to engage and seek local bargaining with the Carriers on the issue of COVID-19 Mandates. We believe that we have a right to bargain over the contours of these policies.

We also believe you share in the commitment to our members to oppose such overreaching policies being leveraged against our membership. The Carriers' policies are arrogant bully tactics that can best be described as a despotic approach for compliance to hold our members' employment status over their head.

We have continually maintained and encouraged all members who choose to get the vaccine to get it. Likewise, we have also maintained the same should also apply to any member who freely chooses not to get the vaccine. However, the latter decision should not be a means to end promising and rewarding careers of our members with their respective Carriers.

As each respective Carrier is handling and issuing these mandated policies differently on each property, we are seeking your support of our intended and anticipated endeavor to approach and engage each of these Carriers at the local level for bargaining with these Carriers within the respective Federations' jurisdiction with regard to the COVID-19 Vaccination mandates.

If you and/or the National Division has no intentions of getting involved, we understand that as the President, that is your decision to make. However, we would ask, should it be your prerogative not to engage, we are collectively seeking a commitment from you and any of the other National Division Officers to not submit any formal position or correspondence to the Carriers from your position(s). We ask this so that none of these Carriers may construe or interpret our position as a preliminary concession or acquiescence from the Organization to implement these policies. Otherwise, it would only serve to thwart our intended efforts at invoking bargaining over this issue. This issue is too vital for us not to act; thus, we have sought your support for our conscious efforts.

We thank you for considering our concerns and seeking communication from you about your intentions in this matter, and we patiently await your response.

Fraternally,

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