BLET, SMART-TD Presidents update members following PEB 250

BLET CAMPAIGN CALLS ON RAIL CARRIERS TO INVEST IN CREWS AND SAFETY

A s Class I rail carriers brag about record profits, its unionized workforce has been without a pay raise since 2019. Rail workers deserve better. The Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen (BLET) is letting the public know about this injustice through an outreach campaign called “Off the Rails,” which criticizes America’s railroads putting profits before safety. The campaign also sheds light on what train railroad carriers to invest in train crews and safety.

The campaign launched in a major way on April 30, at the annual meeting of Berkshire Hathaway shareholders in Omaha, Nebraska. While CEO Warren Buffett boasted about the financial success of Berkshire’s BNSF Railway, BNSF’s locomotive engineers and their family members were outside broadcasting a very different message: BNSF is “off the rails” and “it’s time to invest in crews and safety.”

Continued on page 6...
But, as is now obvious, the carriers presented to the PEB. That process year proposal with wage increases occurring July 1st of 2022, the carriers' proposed 36% of that payable in the first six months sooner doubles the value of each wage increase in the year it is applied. In fact, on a base salary of $75,000, the advancement generates additional compensation of over $11,000 during the term of the Agreement — vastly reducing the financial gap between the 28% and prior proposals. On the same base salaries, the uniﬁed proposal with the earlier effective dates would also generate in excess of $20,000 and $16,000, respectively, in back pay for the years 2021 and 2022.

While we do not agree that it should impact the PEB decision, the history of wage increases in our National Agreements was part of the carriers' presentation in op- position to not only our proposed wage increase values, but also against the earlier annual increase dates. That history is straightforward: in the last proposal, the past 45 years has included GWIs totaling over 18% for a five-year period. From the history, our economist clearly laid out the economic support for the 28% wage proposal presented to the PEB.

Our health and welfare experts also made the case that no additional health and welfare costs should be pushed onto employees. We made the case for needed sick days and additional holidays for all. Smith et al from a joint case for eliminating all non-negotiated attendance policies, allowing General Committees to establish reasonable standards for attendance for voluntary rest days, and improvements to our held away meal allowances.

In all, the United Rail Unions made a sound, reasonable case before the PEB. We must do what is necessary to secure their health care experts, expert economist and all of the witnesses who gave testimony on behalf of our United Rail Unions. In the coming weeks, we will receive the PEB’s recommendations for settlement of our dispute and then take them.

While it was not possible, we also wish every member of every union could have attended the hearings before PEB 250 and had the chance to testify on their own behalf about the con- ditions, the struggles, and the initia- tives that carriers have created for the people whose work brings them profit. Through their ac- tions, and in the case of these drawn out negotiations, their in- action, our brothers and sisters and pay-no-heed attitude toward our brothers and sisters who did the work for all of us through a pandemic, through job losses and an ongoing supply chain crisis could not be clearer. They do not care much about understanding or treating their employees. Some of their as- sertions, such as how happy their employees are, were beyond be- lief — even to those of us that have heard their spin before. We refut- ed them all.

Following the recommendations of the PEB, the parties have another 30-day cooling off peri- od to consider the recommenda- tions before taking it to the PEB. If the carriers continue to refuse to make a ratifiable proposal, very critical decisions will have to be made. As has been said time and again, do not listen to the Carrier moles and trolls that attempt to blame this situation on the employees or their Unions. They are only attempt- ing to divide us as we close in on the ﬁnal months of this round of bargaining. Among our unions, our solidarity is our strength. Please do not allow them to attempted to divide us to succeed.

In solidarity,

Dennis R. Pierce, President
Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen

President Jeremy Ferguson,
SMART Transportation Division

BLET UNVEILS NEW WEBSITE

Earlier this year, the BLET launched a new and improved web- site, www.blet.org. The reor- ganized website features a fresh look, daily news, improved navigation for easy access, an enhanced members-only area, and news updates that will be available on a daily basis. Also, the BLET’s main membership publications, the Locomotive Engineers & Trainmen Journal and the Locomotive Engineers’ Monthly Journal, will be published as PDF docu- ments on the new website.

Enhancements have been made to the features available on the main website. The new website will allow the Members Area to require the member to register on the new website. These enhancements will also be available on the new website.

The new website will be the main Member Area, and will allow the members to see their Division number, dates of monthly meet- ings, and the names of their Division Officers. Members who are urged to alert the White House and their members of the Congress about the dangerous atten- dance policies imposed by Class I freight railroads by using the BLET’s new legisla- tive outreach platform — “Take Ac- tion” — have been activated for this time in our campaign.

As BLET members know from first-hand experience, freight railroads are gutting essential workers at risk with dan- gerous attendance policies that make it nearly impossible for employees to take time off for family emergencies or to be with their families without being retali- ated against or losing their jobs. Fatigues have been a major safety issue in the rail- road industry for years, and the prob- lem has been made worse through the recent implementation of draconian attendance policies.

BLET National President Dennis R. Pierce said: “I encourage all members and their loved ones to use the new webs- ite and let your elected ofﬁcials know about the negative impact attendance policies have had on you personally with your family and professionally in terms of safety outcomes.

In conjunction with the launch of its new website, the BLET National Division has made available a new legislative outreach platform that allows members to contact their elected ofﬁcials on the local, state and national level. Calls for Action and action alerts on the latest rail bills can be found at https://www.blet.org/take-action.

As BLET members know from ﬁrst-hand experience, freight railroads are gutting essential workers at risk with dan- gerous attendance policies that make it nearly impossible for employees to take time off for family emergencies or to be with their families without being retali- ated against or losing their jobs. Fatigues have been a major safety issue in the rail- road industry for years, and the prob- lem has been made worse through the recent implementation of draconian attendance policies.

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s this issue of the Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen News goes to press, the union is awaiting President Joe Biden’s establishment of a Presidential Emergency Board (PEB) to investigate and make recommendations for settlement of the current national contract dispute between labor and the National Carriers Conference Committee (NCCC). BLET National President Dennis R. Pierce said: “BLET members and their fellow rail labor union members are the essential workers who keep the North American supply chain moving every day. These Brothers and Sisters risk their health—and their family’s health—by selflessly working through the global COVID-19 pandemic. It is shameful that the nation’s rail carriers have failed to offer sufficient financial compensation to these essential workers, especially considering that railroads continue to report record earnings.”

IMPORTANT DATES AND EVENTS LEADING UP TO THE CURRENT SITUATION OUTLINED BELOW: NOVEMBER OF 2019:
- The current round of negotiations began when the parties exchanged Section 6 notices. The BLET is negotiating as part of the Coordinated Bargaining Coalition (CBC), a group of unions representing 115,000 rail workers. For negotiating purposes, the National Carriers’ Conference Committee (NCCC) represents the nation’s rail carriers.

DECEMBER 2019-
- JANUARY 2022: Months and years of failed negotiations due to management stonewalling and failure to bargain in good faith. Delays due to COVID-19 pandemic.

MAY 24-26, 2022:
- The NMB holds in-person mediation sessions in Washington, D.C. Similar in-person sessions would follow over the next three weeks. It was announced that the CBC had been joined by another bargaining coalition (the BMWED/SMART Mechanical Coalition) in national negotiations/mediation. Known as the United Rail Unions, the combined coalition represents 100% of the workforce who will be impacted by this round of negotiations.

JUNE 2, 2022:
- The United Rail Unions request a release from mediation and ask the NMB to proffer arbitration. In spite of the Unions’ best efforts to negotiate a fair agreement, the NCCC and the rail carriers that it represents still refuse to make a comprehensive settlement proposal that our members would even remotely entertain. In fact, the carriers continue to advance proposals that insult the hard-working Union members who have carried our Nation through the pandemic.

JUNE 9, 2022:
- After a third week of compulsory NMB-mediated negotiations with the NCCC, the United Rail Unions again ask NMB for a provocation of arbitration.

JUNE 14, 2022:
- After nearly six months of mediation, the NMB offers proffer of arbitration.

JUNE 15, 2022:
- BLET rejects proffer of arbitration, as will all other affiliates of the United Rail Unions coalition. “Arbitration is not the best outcome for the BLET as it strips our membership of the ability to vote on their contract,” President Pierce said. “Voting on contracts is a fundamental right of union membership.”

JUNE 17, 2022:
- NMB releases all parties from mediation, beginning a 30-day cooling-off period under the Railway Labor Act and setting up a potential Presidential Emergency Board (PEB) to settle the dispute. Once established, a PEB is charged with making recommendations on how to reach a settlement and has 30 days to conduct hearings and issue a report. PEB recommendations have often served as the basis for voluntary agreements, but Congress may also intervene under the Railway Labor Act.

JUNE 24, 2022:
- BLET mails ballots to more than 23,000 members seeking authorization for the Union’s leadership to call a strike should one become necessary to settle the ongoing national contract dispute. The strike authorization ballot is a step required by the BLET’s internal law.

JULY 12, 2022:
- Ballots are tabulated in the BLET’s strike authorization vote, with 99.5 percent of those responding voting in favor of a strike. (For more information about the strike authorization vote and an update on negotiations, please see President Pierce’s message on Page 1 of this issue.)

JULY 12, 2022:
- Also on this date, the NMB begins hosting a series of public interest meetings in an effort to assist the parties further in reaching voluntary agreements.

JULY 15, 2022:
- President Biden appointed PEB No. 250 three days prior to the end of the 30-day cooling-off period. The PEB has 30 days to convene and hear the positions from each side, and issue recommendations to settle the dispute. A second 30-day cooling-off period will begin when those recommendations are issued. 888

BLET NATIONAL DIVISION ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS POLICY

President to be aware of the opinions and grievances of the membership, while at the same time providing a timely response to the member’s unofficial communication, if a response is necessary, without needlessly expending limited BLET resources.

ADOPTED AT CLEVELAND, OHIO ON JULY 15, 2006. 888

O fficial communications between BLET members and the National Division require a hard copy of the correspondence, bearing a signature, being received by the National President to be considered an “official communication.” This is to provide that the actual question(s) are addressed, and ensures that when official interpretations are made they have reference to a specific request and can be used in future correspondence. The volume of e-mails received makes it impossible for the National President to answer all unofficial communications. Therefore, it is the policy of the BLET that e-mails addressed to the National President will be reviewed and forwarded to the appropriate officer or staff for a timely response; however, an e-mail message is not considered an official communication.

Moreover, anonymous e-mails and e-mails that do not provide sufficient information concerning the sender to enable National Division staff to confirm the sender’s membership status will not receive any reply or acknowledgement. This policy is intended to allow the National Division to respond to the opinions and grievances of the membership, while at the same time providing a timely response to the member’s unofficial communication, if a response is necessary, without needlessly expending limited BLET resources.
VP Wallace outlines PSR problems, offers solutions at STB hearing

B LET National Vice President Mark L. Wallace testified on April 26 on behalf of the BLET at a hearing before the Surface Transportation Board titled “Urgent Issues in Freight Rail Service.”

STB announced on April 7 that it would hold a two-day hearing to investigate recent rail service problems and recovery efforts involving several Class I carriers. Testimony on the morning of April 26 came primarily from shipper groups and organized labor. During his testimony, Vice President Wallace said that customer service is suffering, the nation’s supply chain is getting worse by the day, and train crew employees are resigning at unprecedented levels due to the implementation of the so-called Precision Scheduled Railroading (PSR) business model and draconian attendance policies.

“Since I have resigned in the recent months, including some employees with 20 years of service — which is almost unheard of in the rail industry. Vice President Wallace also testified how railroads refuse to add employees to fill out pools and extra blocks, which adds fatigue by forcing few employees to work for longer hours.

While crew shortages and mismanagement of crews are a problem with PSR, long trains are a bigger problem. Vice President Wallace testified. He said long trains favored by the PSR operating model, which can be three miles long, cause major delays, reduce velocity, congest networks, and cause accidents.

He was also critical of what he described as self-inflicted delays, in which train crews are only limited to half the allowable track speed (for example, 30 mph in a 60 mph zone) in an effort to use fewer locomotives for fuel conservation initiatives. Regarding the continued mismanagement of the rail workforce, Vice President Wallace said train crews are often required to spend 20-30 hours at an away home terminal prior to being called for a trip back home, which increases fatigue and destroys an employee’s quality of life. Train lineups, which in theory tell workers when they can expect to go to work, are inaccurate and unreliable, which causes tremendous amounts of frustration and anger among the union’s membership.

In a question-and-answer session with STB Chairman Martin Oberman, Vice President Wallace described ways in which the industry could improve its recovery efforts, better service its customers, and better utilize train crews. Vice President Wallace suggested railroads would be more fluid if they eliminated throttle restrictions and reduced train lengths to no more than 8,000-8,500 feet. The long trains block the system and cause the railroads to burn through more train crews prior to getting shipments to their destination.

Additional testimony on behalf of organized labor came from: Greg Regan, President of the Transportation Trades Department, AFL-CIO; Jeremy Fergus, President of the SMART Transportation Division; and SMART-TD members Matthew Brukant, Steven Groat, and Chris Bond. In announcing the hearing, Board Chairman Oberman said: “During my time on the Board, I have raised concerns about the price of Class I railroads have placed on lowering their operating ratios and satisfying their shareholders even at the cost of their customers. Part of that strategy has involved cutting their workforce to the bare bones in order to reduce costs. Over the last six years, the Class I collectively have reduced its workforce by 29% — that is about 45,000 employees cut from the payroll. In my view, all of this has directly contributed to where we are today — rail users experiencing serious deterioration in rail service because, on too many parts of their networks, the railroads simply do not have a sufficient number of employees.”

Vice President Wallace said that the Railway Labor Act was implemented near 100 years ago. Part of the goal of the RLA was to limit labor strikes because they would interrupt the nation’s supply chain. But, he pointed out that PSR has also had a major negative impact on interstate commerce. He suggested that change was necessary and urged the STB to work with Congress to put together a plan to better regulate the industry and protect the nation’s economy.

Vice President Wallace concluded by saying that the National Division had collected letters from BLET members throughout the United States that it would submit to STB for the record, which would further document the problems with PSR and describe how harsh railroad attendance policies have negatively impacted their personal and professional lives.

Also in attendance at the April 26 hearing to represent BLET were: National Secretary-Treasurer Stephen Bruno; and Assistant to the National President and Director of Research John Fink.

BLET National President Dennis Pierce thanked Vice President Wallace for testifying. “It has been our position all along that PSR was nothing more than a Wall Street cash grab, and that shippers and workers have been left holding the bag,” President Pierce said. “I thank Vice President Wallace for the excellent job he did on behalf of BLET members. I hope that this hearing will motivate the STB, along with Congress and the White House, to make meaningful improvements to our nation’s railroad industry.”

TRAINS ARE OFTEN REQUIRED TO SPEND 20-30 HOURS
at an away from home terminal prior to being called for a trip back home, which increases fatigue and destroys an employee’s quality of life.
A s all Local Divisions, General Committees and State Legislative Boards were advised on January 4, 2022, the BLET’s Fifth National Convention will convene in Las Vegas, Nevada, from October 10-13, 2022.

The BLET’s national conventions are held quadrennially, or once every four years. Approximately 475 delegates will represent more than 33,000 active locomotive engineers and trainmen throughout the United States. They will be charged with reviewing and voting on changes to the Brotherhood’s Bylaws. Several invited dignitaries will address the delegates in session as part of the convention proceedings. Delegates will also hear reports from various BLET officers. Pursuant to National Division Rules – Section 20(g) of the BLET Bylaws, the list of delegates to the upcoming National Convention was published in the Locomotive Engineers & Trainmen News (the January-March 2022 issue).

The convention will also be a nominating convention for BLET National Division Officers. Pursuant to the BLET Bylaws, the Rules for the 2022 BLET National Division Officers Election were published in the August-September 2021 issue of the Locomotive Engineers & Trainmen News. The Election Rules and other pertinent information can be found in the Members’ Area of the BLET National Division website, https://members.blet.org.

Delegate registration for the BLET’s Fifth National Convention will take place on Sunday, October 9, 2022. The convention will begin on Monday, October 10 and will be held at Bally’s Las Vegas Hotel and Casino, 3645 S. Las Vegas Blvd., Las Vegas, Nevada 89109.

Updates and related information will be available on the BLET’s National Convention Website, https://bletconvention.org.

During these challenging times, one thing remains certain:

LECMPA is still the leader in protecting BLET members’ income and assets.

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BLET National President Dennis Pierce, along with hundreds of BLET members, their families, and railroaders from other crafts, joined together in a mass protest outside of the CHI Health Center arena to let shareholders and the general public know how terribly rail workers are being treated by BNSF and other Class I carriers.

Today’s railroaders work long hours on long trains that often can stretch three miles. According to a Vice story published in April 2022, members of Congress from both sides of the aisle are concerned about “a workforce that is understaffed, overworked and fatigued at a rail network responsible for hauling hazardous materials.”

“Our members are the essential workers who keep the supply chain moving safely every day,” President Pierce said. “But despite record profits by BNSF and other Class I railroads, our people have failed to get an extra dime in salary during the pandemic and struggle to get any time off.”

“We’ve tried to reason with BNSF and other rail employers at the bargaining table about fatigue, staffing and safety issues,” President Pierce said. “We’ve argued against them in court. And, now we’re making our case to investors and the public. Soon we will be asking government leaders to intervene.”

One day prior to the April 30 shareholder protest, President Pierce held a news conference in Omaha, and several national media outlets were in attendance (including the Associated Press, Bloomberg, and National Public Radio). President Pierce discussed supply chain problems, long trains, and lack of rest for railroad workers. He also discussed the lack of a new national contract and the numerous safety issues impacting Class I railroads. Hundreds of stories that were generated from the press conference were published throughout the United States, including a Bloomberg article that carried the headline, “Buffett’s annual meeting set to be crashed by railroad workers.”

The BLET then took its message to the streets of Omaha, plastering it on billboards, passing out leaflets, and placing newspaper advertisements in both print and digital. The union also testified on April 26 before the Surface Transportation Board in Washington, D.C., about deteriorating conditions for train crews at Class I railroads.

In a recent advertisement that appeared in the Omaha World-Herald, the union attacked BNSF and Union Pacific attendance policies that prohibits engineers and other rail workers from scheduling days off without penalty, even at times “for surgery or jury duty.”

In addition to the newspaper ads, stationary and mobile billboards have been placed in Omaha and other markets in Nebraska and nationally. An advertising campaign also launched in Los Angeles, San Diego and Lincoln, Neb., with other markets being added each week.

The CBS affiliate in Salt Lake City earlier in April filed a story on the union’s campaign to protest similar attendance and staffing issues at Union Pacific.

The Washington Post in an April 2 article titled “Worker-led win at Amazon warehouse could provide new playbook for unions,” observed that the BLET is “preparing to petition President Biden to intervene in negotiations by appointing officials to mediate an emergency settlement or giving train workers the authority to strike. Rail workers fall into a narrow category of workers that require presidential approval to walk off the job.”

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**Off the Rails**

Continued from page 1

OMAHA, NEBRASKA

BLET members pass out leaflets and picket outside the Berkshire Hathaway annual meeting in Omaha, Nebraska, on April 30, 2022.

LITTLE ROCK, ARKANSAS

BLET Town Hall meeting and billboard truck in Little Rock, Arkansas, May 10, 2022.

ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI

BLET Town Hall meeting and billboard truck in St. Louis, Missouri, May 11, 2022.
Retirements for Pruitt, Bruno and Priester announced at BLET’s Denver regional meeting

More than 370 members of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen and their families convened in Denver, Colorado, on the morning of June 14 for opening ceremonies of the BLET’s first regional meeting of 2022.

During the meeting, BLET National President Dennis R. Pierce announced the pending retirement of three members of the BLET Advisory Board who were in attendance. Brother Lee Pruitt has served as First Vice President for the past 12 years; Brother Steve Bruno has served as National Vice-President for the past eight years; and Brother Mike Priester has served as National Secretary-Treasurer for the past 12 years. Brother Pruitt and Brother Priester each have 50 consecutive years of membership, while Brother Bruno has 37 consecutive years of membership.

Presentation of the flags was conducted by a unique color guard comprised entirely of BLET members in active or retired military status: Sean Martinez, Local Chairman of Division 935 (retired Army, Staff Sergeant); Kim Thomas, Local Chairman of Division 192 (active Army, Staff Sergeant); Megan Mead, Director of the Record and Compliance Department (Army, Staff Sergeant); Kim Thomas, Local Chairman of BLET Division 192 (active Army, Specialist SPA); and Paul Aird, BLET Special Representative and member of Division 133 (active Army).

After presentation of the flags, Brother Paul Pearson delivered the invocation. Brother Pearson is Chairman of the BLET’s Colorado State Legislative Board and is a member of BLET Division 133 (Denver, Colo.).

President Pierce then welcomed all members, families and guests to Denver. He introduced members of the BLET Advisory Board who were in attendance, and thanked National Vice President Jim Louie, Special Representative Matt Kronyak, and Special Representative Jason Wright for their work in managing and organizing the regional meeting. President Pierce also recognized and thanked the regional meeting arrangements committee members who provided local support: Thomas A. Baker, Secretary-Treasurer of Division 410 (Trinidad, Colo.); Robert C. Grajeda, Vice Local Chairman of BLET Division 940 (Denver, Colo.); Jeff S. Lillo, Secretary-Treasurer of BLET Division 133 (Denver, Colo.); Levi Robinson, Local Chairman of BLET Division 256 (Denver, Colo.); and Brother Greg Lund, a retired member of Division 421 (Buffalo, New York).

Guest speakers included: State Representative Dr. Yira Caraveo (District 31); State Senator Brittany Pettersen (District 22); State Representative Tom Sullivan (District 37); Railroad Retirement Board Labor Member John Bragg; and BLET Auxiliary National President Kat Bisbikis. Also, FRA Administrator Amit Bose, Rep. Jason Crow (D-CO) and Rep. Joe Neguse (D-CO) submitted greetings by video.

President Pierce gave a brief presentation regarding the State of the Union. He provided an update on national negotiations, including the steps involving mediation before the actual members of the National Mediation Board. “The Railroads have refused to offer or agree to any serious contract proposals that BLET members would find acceptable. We are not alone in this fight,” he said. “All of the Rail Unions involved in national negotiations with the Nation’s freight carriers have received the same pathetic contract proposals that we have.”

“Our members have earned a fair contract, and we stand together in our effort to move this dispute to the next steps of the Railway Labor Act. My hope is that the NMB profers arbitration in the coming days so we can do just that,” he said.

President Pierce also touched upon numerous other issues, including: CSX’s acquisition of the Pan Am Railways; the Canadian National-Kansas City Southern merger; BNSF Railway’s terminated lease of the Montana Rail Link; the BLET’s Fifth National Convention coming up in October; the new BLET website; and the recent International Brotherhood of Teamsters election. Newly-elected IB General President Sean O’Brien and General Secretary-Treasurer Fred Zuckerman attended the regional meeting welcome reception on the evening of June 13, where they met with BLET members for several hours in an informal setting. President Pierce also announced that the 2023 BLET regional meetings are scheduled for Milwaukee (the week of June 26) and Myrtle Beach (the week of August 14).

As part of the morning session, President Pierce led members in a moment of silence for Brother Paul Wingo, retired BLET National Vice President who passed away at the age of 78 on June 6, 2022. Members in attendance also observed a moment of silence in honor of all BLET members who have been killed in the line of duty since 1989, whose names were shown in a solemn video presentation.

The morning session concluded with a video presentation highlighting the union’s recent efforts to bring attention to the struggles that railroad workers face. In essence, railroad workers have been without a contract pay raise since 2019, yet carriers continually brag about record profits. The BLET is letting the public know about this injustice through several outreach campaigns. A mobile billboard truck was on site at the BLET regional meeting in Denver, where the group on-masse adjourned for a brief rally to send a message to rail carriers that they are off track, and that it’s time to settle the national contract by investing in crews and safety. Members took advantage of educational opportunities throughout the remainder of the week. Workshops featured specialized training for BLET Legislative Representatives, Secretary-Treasurers and Local Chairmen. The 2022 Denver regional meeting concluded with a banquet on the evening of June 16.
BLET members ratify new contract with DM&E: Wages to increase 27%

By a nearly 5-to-1 ratio, members of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen (BLET) ratified a new on-property agreement with the Dakota, Minnesota and Eastern Railroad (DM&E) on June 13, 2022. The agreement provides General Wage Increases (GWI) at 24.5% (27% compounded) for the life of the contract (Jan. 1, 2020 to January 1, 2024). There are no major work rule changes and no health care concessions contained in the contract.

"The pay increases in this contract reflect that our members are essential to the railroad's success," BLET National President Dennis R. Pierce said. "I thank our DM&E members for staying the course and for their solidarity in support for the negotiating team throughout the process."

The negotiating team consisted of CP Rail—U.S./Metra Northern District/Indiana Southern/Dakota Minnesota & Eastern General Committee of Adjustment Chairman Pete Semenek, First Vice General Chairman Nick Mugavero, and Assistant Vice President for Organizing Marvin "Rufus" Ruffin.

"I would like to thank Brothers Semenek, Mugavero and Ruffin for their work in bringing these negotiations to a successful conclusion," President Pierce said.

BLET members who work for the DM&E belong to four BLET Divisions: 117 in Mason City, Iowa; Division 210 in Denver, Iowa; Division 366 in Savannah, Illinois; and Division 393 in Kansas City, Missouri. For collective bargaining purposes they are represented by the CP Rail System's U.S. General Committee of Adjustment.

The DM&E is a Class II railroad and a subsidiary of the Canadian Pacific Rail.