



## Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Employees Division of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters

Freddie N. Simpson  
*President*

Perry K. Geller, Sr.  
*Secretary-Treasurer*

January 14, 2011

The Honorable James L. Oberstar  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Mr. Oberstar:

Please accept this modest testimonial on behalf of the Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Employees Division/IBT (BMWED) as our acknowledgment of what a true friend you have been to the men and women who work diligently to keep America's trains rolling down the tracks. For over four decades, the members of the BMWED knew that when we approached you, we would obtain a fair, honest and forthright discussion and understanding of our issues.

Your passion and commitment to preserving and expanding quality rail passenger service in this country is unmatched. We in the BMWED remember fondly the many times you fought those who wanted to destroy Amtrak and sidetrack any attempts to grow rail passenger service. Your steadfast support during our more than eight years of unsuccessful bargaining with Amtrak provided us with the support to persevere to obtain a fair settlement for our members when so many others in positions of power urged us to settle for an inferior deal. That support will never be forgotten by this Union.

The recent Rail Safety legislation will stand for us as your crowning achievement. Railroading is a dangerous job under the best of circumstances. The Rail Safety law provides our members with the protection to report injuries and unsafe conditions without fear of retaliation by petty-minded railroad officials. The obligation placed upon the railroads to focus on the safety of their operations will aid in our goal of never again having to attend a memorial service for a Brother or Sister killed in the line of duty.

Finally, I must end with the best testament I have ever heard about your dedication and skill. When talking with a rank and file member about his day visiting various offices on the Hill, I asked him what stood out. He answered that all of the people he met were courteous and polite and listened carefully to what he had to say. However, he added, "when I spoke with Congressman Oberstar, I knew he got it and he wasn't just being polite." I can't say it better: Mr. Oberstar, for all those years you "got it" for the BMWED. Thank you.

Sincerely yours,

President

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