

New Jersey Transit Rail Labor Coalition

NMB Releases Unions on New Jersey Transit Unions Say Presidential Emergency Board Is Next

June 16, 2015

The National Mediation Board yesterday released from further mediation every commuter union on New Jersey Transit (NJT).

The unions, working together in the New Jersey Transit Rail Labor Coalition, immediately announced their intention to invoke a Presidential Emergency Board (PEB), which will make non-binding recommendations to settle the four year old contract dispute.

The Coalition includes every rail union on NJT, representing more than 4,000 commuter workers.

Coalition spokesmen said, "By announcing our intention to invoke a PEB, we want to remove any fears the riding public may have that a strike could occur in July. Our goal is to reach a voluntary agreement. We are optimistic that a neutral PEB will find reasonable our proposals to follow the pattern settlements reached on New York commuter railroads. There is simply no justification for the workers we represent to fall further behind their counterparts on Long Island and Metro-North railroads."

Negotiations for new contracts opened on July 1, 2011. NMB efforts at mediation failed to produce agreements, prompting today's releases. Under the governing Railway Labor Act, a strike would be possible at 12:01 AM, July 16, 2015, unless one of the involved Governors, the commuter agency or unions request the President to appoint an Emergency Board. Once appointed, the PEB will have thirty days to hold hearings and issue non-binding recommendations to settle the dispute. Creation of the PEB will start a 120 day cooling off period during which neither side can resort to self-help.

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