

RWU Resolution on Necessary Changes to Railroad Retirement

Whereas, the current railroad retirement legislation does not allow for the option for railroad workers to retire earlier than 60 years of age; and

Whereas, numerous workers in many industries who have reached age 55 and have a minimum of 30 years of service are provided the option of electing to choose such early retirement; and

Whereas, railroad work should be recognized for what it is – mentally and physical demanding and dangerous work that should provide the option for early retirement; and

Whereas disabled railroad workers often lose medical coverage after they become disabled through their very work as railroad workers; and

Whereas, all retired railroaders and their dependents deserve to be provided continuous medical benefits: and

Whereas, spouses of railroad workers currently cannot apply for full railroad retirement benefits until that spouse of a railroad worker has reached age 60, or been declared disabled; and

Whereas, railroad workers do not receive credited service for months during which they are furloughed and for months that they served in the military prior to railroad service;

Therefore, be it resolved, that RWU supports a revamping of the Railroad Retirement System to provide the following benefits:

1 - That workers 58 years old with 30 years of service be able to retire with full benefits.

2 -- That workers younger than 58 years with 30 years of service be able to retire at their discretion with a maximum of five years younger than 58 and suffer a penalty of no more than 2 percent per year for each year younger than 58.

3 -- Those railroad workers with 58 years of age but less than 30 years of service be able to retire at their discretion with a maximum of five years less than 30 years of service and suffer a penalty of no more than 2 percent per year for each year less than 30 years of service.

4 - That the spouse of a railroad worker be entitled to full railroad retirement benefits the day the railroad worker retires or dies, if the spouse is fifty years of age or older, regardless of the medical condition of the spouse on the date that the railroad worker retires, or dies; and

5 - That all disabled railroad workers should be provided the same medical coverage as they had before they became disabled, and that the spouse and other dependents of a disabled railroad worker shall also be provided such medical coverage; and

6 -- That any and all disabled railroad workers continue to accrue service months toward retirement until the worker reaches the minimum required retirement age; and

7 – That all railroad workers continue to accrue credit towards railroad retirement: a) if/when they are furloughed by a rail carrier; and b) for months of military service prior to railroad employment no more than their active duty on their initial enlistment, or 4 years, whichever is greater; and

8 – That the rail carriers will provide no less than fifty percent (50%) of the monthly health insurance premiums for all retired railroad workers and their legal dependents upon full, or earlier retirement

9 - That the railroad companies be required to provide such medical coverage tax exempt to disabled workers and their dependents; AND

Be it Finally Resolved that RWU will mount a campaign among the rank-and-file and the union leadership to push for such reforms as outlined above to the Railroad Retirement System.

