ASHINGTON, D.C., February 21, 2008 – Teamsters General President Jim Hoffa announced the union’s endorsement of Sen. Barack Obama for president. The endorsement is the first step in mobilizing the union’s 1.4 million members and their families to elect Obama.

“Senator Obama understands the challenges working people face every day,” Hoffa said. “He is the candidate in the best position to lead our movement to restore the American dream for working people in this country. Senator Obama will fight for better wages, real health care reform, stronger retirement security, fair trade and an end to the outsourcing of good jobs. He understands the importance of giving workers a voice at work and will fight for strong unions to help rebuild America’s middle class.”

The endorsement decision follows a meeting in Austin, Texas, between Hoffa and Obama, and completes a months-long process that included scientific polling of Teamster members, surveys of local union and joint council leaders and deliberations by the union’s democratically elected General Executive Board.

“We have been fortunate to have candidates throughout the Democratic primary who are friends of working families and the Teamsters Union,” Hoffa said. “We are pleased that all of the Democratic candidates have focused on issues of importance to working people, including wages, health care, retirement security, fair trade and outsourcing.”

The union’s endorsement immediately activates the union’s 50-state election program, with special emphasis on swing states.

“Senator Obama will stand with the Teamsters when it comes to fighting for working families,” Hoffa said. “This endorsement begins a partnership to change America. Together we will reinvent the political process and give a voice to those who have been ignored by the Bush administration for the past eight years.”

Hoffa emphasized Obama’s commitment to rebuilding and strengthening the national transportation infrastructure, a key priority of the Teamsters Union.

“Senator Obama will fight to rebuild our transportation infrastructure,” Hoffa said. “He will work with us to address critical issues from our ports to our highways, rails and airports. We need a president who is focused on rebuilding America and Barack Obama will be that president.”

The International Brotherhood of Teamsters represents more than 1.4 million hardworking men and women throughout the United States, Canada and Puerto Rico.
SLB March 2, 2008 – According to the numbers provided by the BLE-T National Division, in December 2007, 23% of all Texas members were giving generously to the BLE-T PAC. The National Legislative Office and the Texas Legislative Board share in the decision (50% - 50% split) of which Federal Candidates receive these funds.

The TSLB administers another PAC fund called the TX-PAC. The TSLB uses this fund exclusively to support the election of labor friendly candidates in Texas.

PAC funds are voluntary contributions from BLE-T members. PAC funds are especially important this year due to the upcoming Presidential Elections. When we help elect Federal Candidates that are friendly to unions and support our issues, we have the support we need to pass legislation like the railroad safety improvement acts, currently before Congress, H.R. 2095 and S 1889. Also, Amtrak reauthorization and funding was passed last year. The Worker’s Free Choice Act is a goal that labor can achieve with enough support. Don’t forget that railroad retirement was enacted by congress. It needs further improvement.

In Texas, PAC contributions help elect candidates who are likely to help us with legislation like House Bill 1083, the Limo Safety Bill, which we introduced last year. Last session this bill was killed by the Chairperson of the Calendars Committee, Beverly Woolley, who is hostile toward legislation sponsored by Democrats and unions. Had the Calendars Committee Chair been friendly, this bill would have made it to the House floor where it would surely have passed on to the Senate. One of the candidates we helped to get elected, Representative Marc Veasey, Fort Worth, introduced the bill at our request and also testified on our behalf when the bill was heard by the Transportation Committee.

The Texas State Legislative Board would like to recognize the following divisions for their outstanding participation in the both the TX-PAC and the BLE-T PAC.

Division 918 in North Pleasanton, Texas has 100% participation in the BLE-T PAC. Mike Davis, Division Legislative Representative, has done an excellent job of persuading members of his division to sign up. Closely following are Divisions 496 in Texarkana at 80% participation, Marty Phillips, LR, and Division 834 in Mineola at 77%, James Ussery, LR. Division 863 in Brownwood, James Dodd, LR, comes next at 71%. Monetarily, Division 197 in San Antonio, Dan Stanfield, LR, contributes $575.00 each month to the BLE-T PAC fund.

In the TX-PAC program, Division 944 in Dallas leads at 39% participation, L.J. Williams, LR, followed closely by Division 566 in Del Rio at 37%, Catarino Garcia, LR. Next is Division 834 in Mineola at 36% and Division 496 in Texarkana at 30%. Money-wise, Division 592 in Dalhart, Tom Lovett, LR, leads the state with $131.00 contributed each month to the TX-PAC fund.

Although these numbers are great, we still need more participation from members. We urge each and every one of you to give as much as you can to one or both of the PACs. Remember, union dues cannot be used for campaign purposes, only voluntary contributions. If we are to have a strong political voice, we must have your PAC contribution.

If every member in Texas contributed only $5.00 each month (that’s less than 17 cents a day) our PAC fund would collect over $180,000 a year. Talk about a strong voice! Contributions to either PAC fund can easily and painlessly be done through payroll deduction. See your division LR or Secretary-Treasurer or contact the TSLB to, please, sign up today!

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**Burlington Northern Paid $240,000 in 2007 to Lobby on Rail-Security Measures**

ASHINGTON (AP) – Burlington Northern Santa Fe Corp. paid Arthur P. Endres Jr. $240,000 in the 2007 to lobby the federal government on measures that would improve rail security and require background checks for railroad employees and contractors, among other issues.

The railroad company based in Fort Worth, Texas, paid Endres $120,000 in the second half of the year, according to a disclosure form posted online last week by the Senate’s public records office. In total, BNSF RAILPAC contributed $1,278,091 in funds to lobbying efforts in 2007.

Union Pacific Railroad’s Fund for Effective Government doled out $1,232,855 in contributions for the same period and UP Corporation spent $9.7 million to lobby against potential new regulations on the railroad industry, among other issues.

The Omaha, Neb.-based company spent $6.3 million in the second half of 2007 to lobby the federal government according to a disclosure form posted online Feb. 14 by the Senate’s public records office.

Union Pacific lobbied Congress, the Department of Transportation and the White House against legislation that would impose new regulations on the railroad industry. The company also lobbied against a bill to eliminate certain exemptions for railroad operators to antitrust law and opposed legislation to mandate a DOT strategy for improving railroad safety.

In addition, Union Pacific lobbied Congress on rail security issues and supported additional funds to test rail tank cars.

The company spent $3.4 million in the first six months of 2007 to lobby on many of the same issues, according to an amended midyear report.

Lobbyists are required to disclose activities that could influence members of the executive and legislative branches, under a federal law enacted in 1995.

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**No Voter Fraud Found in Texas**

November 27, 2007 Ed Sills Newsletter – Good news from the audit of the state’s voter rolls. Based on the May 12 special election tallies, only 0.4 percent of the 12.4 million registered voters in the state might be ineligible to vote, and none of the possibly illegal voters actually voted. The audit didn’t find any voter fraud. The State Auditor’s Office identified 49,049 voters who possibly shouldn’t have been there, (the report included the “possibly” label since it’s difficult to tell for sure on these things). Among the potential stinkers were records for 23,114 “possible felons”, records for 23,576 voters “who may be deceased”, and duplicate records for 2,359 voters. They didn’t identify any cases where those folks voted.
**Myths About Congress Exposed**

**Tuesday, November 06, 2007 Martin Frost via email** –

Every time someone starts talking about proposed new government programs to make health insurance available to the more than 40 million people who don’t currently have coverage, there is often a note of demagoguery about members of the House and Senate interjected into the discussion.

Lots of people – some of whom should know better – start bemoaning the “free health insurance” provided by the government to members of Congress. Simply stated, there is no such thing.

Here are the facts.

Members of the House and Senate may be seen by the office of the attending physician in the U.S. Capitol (Navy doctors on active duty) when they have a health problem while in Washington, D.C. They may be referred to Walter Reed Army Hospital or Bethesda Naval Hospital for further treatment if necessary. They are not required to use this service and may seek private medical care while in Washington if they so desire.

If House and Senate members choose to use the Capitol attending physician and the Army and Navy hospitals while in D.C., they pay an annual fee (equivalent to being part of an HMO). If they seek private medical care while in D.C. or back in their home states, they use their private health insurance. If they are over 65, they use Medicare and whatever private supplemental insurance they may carry.

And, of course, they paid into Medicare while working just like everyone else.

Members of Congress are eligible – like all other federal employees – to sign up for one of the “cafeteria” health insurance plans offered all other federal employees. If they sign up for one of these policies, the federal government pays two-thirds of the premium and the Congressman pays the other one-third. This is comparable to insurance offered by many private employers.

During the 26 years I served in Congress, I always signed up for one of the Blue Cross plans that had both deductibles and co-pays.

The family (spouse and children) of House and Senate members are not entitled to be treated by the Capitol attending physician and thus must be covered by private insurance. I always included my wife and minor children under my Blue Cross plan and paid the higher family premium.

It is legitimate to suggest that uninsured workers have the right to buy into one of the plans covering federal employees as a viable option for obtaining affordable health insurance. Since the group (all federal employees) is so large, the premiums are somewhat lower than policies offered to self-employed individuals or to the employees of small companies.

Just don’t attack members of Congress for getting “free” insurance for themselves and their families whenever the subject is raised.

While I am on the subject of things that aren’t true, let’s also talk about members of Congress and Social Security. Since 1983, all members of Congress have been required to pay into Social Security just like everyone else in the country. That doesn’t stop the demagogues from stating as “fact” that Members of Congress are exempt from Social Security. It hasn’t been true for 24 years.

Members of the House and Senate legitimately can be blamed for lots of things like not ending the Iraq war fast enough and not funding the federal government by the start of the fiscal year (Oct. 1). They, however, should not be blamed for things that aren’t true.

So next time your cousin, your next door neighbor, the person at church or one of the know-nothing radio talk show hosts starts criticizing elected officials for leading privileged lives and not having to pay for health insurance or Social Security, take a minute to set them straight.

Those of us lucky enough to serve in public office will take all the legitimate criticism anyone can dish out. We knew we weren’t promised a rose garden when we put our name on the ballot. However, don’t give us a hard time for something that isn’t true.

**NOTE: Martin Frost served 13 terms as a Texas Congressman**

**Bill Paying Process for On-The-Job Injuries**

**By Steve Young, Designated Legal Council** – One of the badly misunderstood issues of a railroad injury is: “Does the railroad pay for my medical treatment”? The answer is NO. The railroad does not pay for an injured worker’s medical treatment and care. All of the treatment and care a railroad worker incurs with respect to an on the job injury is paid by the current policy, GA 23000. GA 23000 is one of the best polices in America today. We can thank our union for this great policy.

Quite often an injured member sees a doctor only to be told by the railroad and/or the doctor’s staff that either the railroad is pays the doctor or that the railroad must approve payment before the doctor is paid.

Under GA 23000 an on the job injury is paid just like an off the job injury. There is no difference with respect to payment for the medical services. There is no need to get approval from the railroad or the claim agent and there is no need to get a second opinion to see a specialist.

Many doctors don’t seem to understand this. The typical family doctor thinks that someone who is hurt at work is covered by worker compensation. Under a worker compensation plan the doctor must get approval from the worker compensation adjuster before he gets paid for his services. So the doctor typically thinks they have to call the railroad before they can treat the patient. This is not the case for a railroad worker.

A memo issued by BNSF to all health care providers in 2006 confirms the policy. This might be helpful for an injured worker to have to give to his doctor who thinks the person has a comp case.

A couple of highlights of the memo:

1. National railroads are not covered by state worker compensation plans.
2. Regardless of the cause of injury or illness, medical treatment costs are paid by the employee’s health and welfare plan and the same rate.
3. Authorization for service is obtained from the employee, not the plan or the railroad.
The study was commissioned by KCS and conducted by TranSystems to study the Laredo-Nuevo Laredo area to determine the best location for a new international railroad crossing of the Rio Grande River between the U.S. and Mexico, and to prepare information needed for a U.S. Presidential Permit application to be made by KCS for a new bridge at this location.

In reviewing all options for such a future rail crossing, TranSystems considered whether sites would be suitable for bridge construction and financially feasible, secure, operationally efficient, provide needed capacity, divert international rail traffic around the city centers of Laredo and Nuevo Laredo, minimize any displacement of residents or businesses, improve the environment, make existing rail rights-of-way available for other public purposes, be consistent with TxDOT’s long range East Loop bypass plans, improve the flow of rail traffic and vehicular traffic, and minimize stranded rail assets vital to international rail operations in the Laredo-Nuevo Laredo area. Taking into consideration all of these considerations, TranSystems recommends Site 3.

“Clearly, of the five sites we reviewed in this study, the Site 3 location is hands down the best,” said James L. Terry, principal and vice president of TranSystems. “Site 3 will produce the most viable location for improving border security and efficiency; remove international rail traffic out of downtown Laredo and Nuevo Laredo; and best accommodate railroad operating needs and environmental concerns for the future.”

Site 3 is located between the cities of Rio Bravo and El Cenizo, TX, southeast of the current Laredo crossing. It would be outside the developed areas of Laredo and Nuevo Laredo, but allow vital connections to the three rail yards - Union Pacific’s Port Laredo, The Texas Mexican Railway Company’s Laredo Yard, and Kansas City Southern de Mexico, S.A. de C.V.’s (KCSM) Sanchez Yard – to remain in use. This is very important so as to not leave stranded these vital rail yards, which are essential to international rail traffic. Other crossing alternatives would leave one or more of these yards stranded.

The study listed many benefits of Site 3 over other alternatives that were also reviewed. These benefits include completely removing international freight traffic and vehicular conflicts from congested city centers in Laredo and Nuevo Laredo, providing connections to the existing rail yards, improving safety and security, increasing future rail capacity that is operationally viable, making the existing rights-of-way through Laredo and Nuevo Laredo and the current rail bridge potentially available for other public uses (including possible commuter uses), and improving the environment while reducing environmental risks as compared to other crossing alternatives.

The TranSystems study also considered other rail crossing alternatives including the Columbia-Camino site, the Flecha Lane site, and Sites 1 and 2 southeast of Laredo. For a variety of reasons, the study found all of these alternatives to be inferior to Site 3.

“Site 3 is superior in every consideration for a future international rail crossing to these other alternatives,” said Terry of TranSystems. “We looked closely at all of them and Site 3 is the obvious choice both from a public benefit and from a railroad operating point of view.”

In late October of this year, KCS announced its intent to seek on an expedited basis a U.S. Presidential Permit and Mexican federal authority to construct a new international rail bridge over the Rio Grande River in the Laredo-Nuevo Laredo area. The company believes Site 3 is the best alternative and would retain the trade-based economy for Laredo and Nuevo Laredo for decades to come. The TranSystems study provides some of the preliminary engineering that will be needed for KCS to prepare both its U.S. and Mexican permit applications.

“We intend to accelerate our permit application process in the U.S. and Mexico so that this project can move forward on an accelerated basis,” said Warren K. Erdman, executive vice president corporate affairs for KCS. “This project and its East Loop Bypass Corridor alignment will be the best way to get rail traffic out of downtown Laredo and Nuevo Laredo in the future, expand rail capacity, improve safety and convenience for motorists, enhance security along the entire corridor, and provide both the public and private benefits to make this a win-win for everyone.

(Continued on Page 5)
LEVELAND, January 18th, 2008 – It’s a familiar refrain: “What has the BLET done for me lately?”

The answer is quite a lot.

BLET collective bargaining agreements provide our members with some of the highest blue collar wages in the United States, and also include important work rules that ensure our members’ safety on duty.

Often overlooked – but just as important – are the fringe benefits provided to BLET members as part of the Brotherhood’s collective bargaining agreements.

In 2008, BLET members on average will receive more than $31,000 in fringe benefits, according to the BLET’s 2008 Fringe Benefit Study.

The rail carriers will pay an average of $12,919.32 toward membership health care benefits – that’s $12,919.32 per member working under the National Contract.

This does not include what the carriers’ contribute toward the retirees’ health care plan, which is an additional $1,331.76 per member, per year. It also does not include benefits of $548.64 per member, per year toward the dental plan, and $121.92 per member, per year for the vision plan.

“Our medical benefits are among the best in the country,” BLET National President Don Hahs said. “Our members deserve every penny of this fringe benefit.”

These fringe benefits also extend to Railroad Retirement payments. In fact, nearly half of the $31,282.02 that BLET members receive each year in fringe benefits goes toward Railroad Retirement payments.

For each Class 1 railroad worker covered by the National Contract, rail carriers will contribute $6,324 per year in Railroad Retirement Tier 1 taxes and an additional $9,183.90 per year in Railroad Retirement Tier 2 taxes. That’s a total of $15,507.90. (As a side note, the same railroad workers will each pay $6,324 per year in Tier 1 taxes and $2,960.10 in Tier 2 taxes.)

“Our Railroad Retirement system is strong and healthy, and I hope it’ll be that way for generations to come,” President Hahs said. “As economists provide a dire forecast for Social Security, it is good to know that our members can depend on the reliability of Railroad Retirement.”

The money values set forth in this study are computed on costs actually known as of January 2008, and the estimated value of fringe benefits accruing to operating employees is based on annual wages of $75,900 to $102,000, which are the maximum Tier 2 and Tier 1 Railroad Retirement taxes, respectively.

It should also be noted that the study does not take in to consideration vacations, holidays and other time off benefits, which vary by railroad, class of service and seniority.

“I am proud of the contracts negotiated by the BLET,” President Hahs said. “Railroad jobs are good jobs – the kind of jobs you can depend on to raise a family. The wages and work rules are just as important as the fringe benefits. So the next time someone asks, ‘What has the union done for me lately?’, you can point them to this study and show what the BLET is doing every day to provide its hard working members with decent jobs and decent benefits.”

Members may download a PDF of the 2008 Fringe Benefits report from the BLET website at: http://www.ble-t.org/FringeBenefits2008.pdf

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

Erdman said KCS plans to begin preparing its U.S. and Mexican permit applications immediately and file them as soon as possible in 2008. He said KCS will work closely with local and state officials in Texas and Tamaulipas to coordinate the project going forward and hopes to have a detailed application for both U.S. and Mexican officials to review before the end of 2008.

KCS currently has a Memorandum of Understanding with the State of Tamaulipas and the City of Nuevo Laredo to work together on the project and has briefed officials from TxDOT as well as local elected officials in Laredo and Webb County. The detailed TranSystems study is available at www.kcsouthern.com.

Headquartered in Kansas City, Mo., KCS is a transportation holding company that has railroad investments in the U.S., Mexico and Panama. Its primary U.S. holding is The Kansas City Southern Railway Company, serving the central and south central U.S. Its international holdings include KCSM, serving northeastern and central Mexico and the port cities of Lázaro Cárdenas, Tampico and Veracruz, and a 50 percent interest in Panama Canal Railway Company, providing ocean-to-ocean freight and passenger service along the Panama Canal. KCS’ North American rail holdings and strategic alliances are primary components of a NAFTA Railway system, linking the commercial and industrial centers of the U.S., Mexico and Canada.

New Quiet Zones in Texas as Reported by the Federal Railroad Administration

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FRA Administrator Joseph H. Boardman, stressing that stricter time, every day, no matter what task they are performing,” said actions. through employee disciplinary procedures or other corrective internal railroad standard operating procedures and addressed present, these types of mistakes are generally only subject to now result in a violation of federal rail safety regulations. At rail cars in a position that obstruct or foul an active track may person in front to monitor for clear track ahead, and leaving improperly lined track switches, shoving rail cars without a (FRA) National Rail Safety Action Plan.

This rule is the centerpiece of the Federal Railroad Administration’s serious train accidents,” said Secretary Peters, noting issuance of U.S. Transportation Secretary Mary E. Peters.

DOT Takes Action To Reduce Train Accident Caused By Human Error

The U.S. Department of Transportation February 13, 2008 WASHINGTON, D.C. – Reducing common mistakes that result in nearly half of all human factor-caused train accidents is the aim of a new federal regulation that places greater accountability on both railroad management and employees for complying with basic operating rules, announced U.S. Transportation Secretary Mary E. Peters.

“We are tackling several commonplace errors that can lead to serious train accidents,” said Secretary Peters, noting issuance of this rule is the centerpiece of the Federal Railroad Administration’s (FRA) National Rail Safety Action Plan.

Peters explained that relatively simple errors such as improperly lined track switches, shoving rail cars without a person in front to monitor for clear track ahead, and leaving rail cars in a position that obstruct or foul an active track may now result in a violation of federal rail safety regulations. At present, these types of mistakes are generally only subject to internal railroad standard operating procedures and addressed through employee disciplinary procedures or other corrective actions.

“We want everyone to know how to do their jobs safely every time, every day, no matter what task they are performing.” said FRA Administrator Joseph H. Boardman, stressing that stricter adherence to core operating rules will prevent train accidents and employee injuries.

Boardman said the federal rule essentially defines three distinct levels of responsibility and accountability including: railroad managers for putting in place programs designed to test employees for proficiency in abiding by applicable operating rules; supervisors for properly administering such operational tests; and employees for complying with the rules. Under the regulations, employees will have a “right of challenge” should they be instructed to take actions that, in good faith, they believe would violate the rules. FRA will actively monitor compliance with these requirements through inspections and audits, and certain violations may result in a fine ranging from $7,500 to $16,000. In some cases, individuals may also be subject to personal liability, he said.

FRA undertook development of this final rule after detecting an increase in human factor-caused train accidents in recent years. Additional impetus was provided by a January 2005 accident in Graniteville, SC, that killed nine people. The accident occurred when a train was erroneously diverted off a mainline track due to an improperly lined switch, then collided with a parked train, and resulted in the release of toxic chlorine gas from three tank cars.

A complete copy of the final rule can be found at www.fra.dot.gov.
LEVELAND, February 28 – The Economic Stimulus Payment train is about to leave the station, but IRS is worried that some Railroad Retirement recipients may get left behind.

Congress passed, and the President signed into law, a provision to pay so-called “rebates” to Americans who file tax returns. In so doing, they also extended the payments to include recipients of certain Railroad Retirement Tier 1 payments as well as veterans and Social Security recipients who ordinarily do not have to even file a tax return. The minimum payment for those who qualify is $300 for individuals and $600 for married couples filing a joint income tax return.

The payments will be calculated by the IRS based on tax returns filed now through the end of 2008 reporting income received and taxes due for the 2007 tax year. But since some Railroad Retirement recipients don’t make enough income to have to file a tax form, there is great concern that they might miss the opportunity to receive money coming to them.

This year, Tier 1 Railroad Retirement recipients who do not otherwise have to file anything with the IRS will want to send in a tax form in order to receive a stimulus payment, according to the Internal Revenue Service.

Individuals who have income other than Railroad Retirement Tier 1 benefits and are required to file a tax return and pay taxes for 2007 have nothing more to do. They will automatically receive their economic stimulus payments after they file their tax forms, beginning this spring and into early summer. This would include people who receive Tier 1 Railroad Retirement benefits, but who also work and earn enough to have to file and pay taxes.

But Railroad Retirement Tier 1 recipients who sometimes also receive certain Social Security or Veterans benefit payments (generally none of which are taxable) will need to file an abbreviated tax form this year so the IRS can send them the stimulus payment they are entitled to receive.

HERE IS HOW IT WORKS.

Those who have no tax liability and are not required to file a tax return may qualify for a minimum payment of $300 ($600 if filing a joint return) if they send the IRS a simple tax return reflecting $3,000 or more in qualifying income. For the purpose of the stimulus payments, benefits reported on the 2007 Form RRB-1099 in box 5 can be used to qualify for a rebate. Caution – not all benefits shown on Form RRB-1099 can be used as qualifying income for this purpose. Only those shown in box 5 should be used.

HERE IS WHAT TO DO.

Those who are not required to file a 2007 return but whose total qualifying income (including earned income, Social Security, Railroad Retirement Tier 1 and certain veterans’ benefits) would equal or exceed $3,000, should file a simple tax return reporting the income and benefits to establish eligibility. You can use a Form 1040A and report the total of your benefits on Line 14a, or you can use a Form 1040 and report the total of your benefits on Line 20a.

Please note that both of these lines refer only to Social Security, but you should enter the total of all your benefits received there, whether your only benefits were Railroad Retirement Tier 1, or a combination of any of the three (Social Security, Railroad Retirement, or veterans’). If you have any earned income, it is reported on a separate line, Line 7, of either form.

Your name, Social Security number and signature (those entries for both you and your spouse if filing jointly), as well as your address, filing status and whether or not you’d like to receive your payment via Direct Deposit, are the only other items needed on the tax return. No other lines need be filled in. A sample 1040A showing the minimal information needed can be viewed on the IRS Website at IRS.gov and used as a model for completing the form.

The IRS emphasized that people with no filing requirement who turn in a tax return to qualify for the economic stimulus payment will not get a tax bill. People in this category will not owe money because of the stimulus payment. The stimulus payments are not taxable.

More information on these economic stimulus payments is available on www.irs.gov. Just click on “Rebate questions” link. IRS wants to make sure that no one who is qualified for a payment gets left behind.

(The information was provided by the Internal Revenue Service.)

New and Enhanced Plans Under Policy GA-23111

LEVELAND, February 2008 – The Cooperating Railway Labor Organizations (CRLO) have worked with United Healthcare to develop a new set of benefit plans under GA-23111, which offer more comprehensive coverage and more choice for eligible persons who are not yet covered under Medicare. As a result, three new benefit plans were recently approved, with availability set for the upcoming open enrollment in 2008.

These new benefit plans, called Plans A, B and C, will provide three new options with different costs and plan designs, allowing members to select the plan best suited for their needs. The current Plans B and C will be replaced by these three new options.

Individuals who are not yet eligible for Medicare and need coverage will find these plans helpful. Because of these changes, the open enrollment period for this year will start early by one month, beginning in April and continue through May. Anyone selecting one of the new plans will be covered effective June 1, 2008.

More information will soon be available about these plan choices in time for the open enrollment.
The Texas Mainline

The Texas Mainline is published by the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen, Texas State Legislative Board. This publication is made available to members as a means to create legislative awareness, enhance knowledge, spark enthusiasm, generate participation and foster an environment of solidarity.

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Your comments and suggestions are welcome.

Texas State Legislative Board
Founded 1889

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Do You Contribute to the TXPAC?

Legislative decisions impact our livelihoods, job security, wages and working conditions, (contracts, random drug testing, certification, Amtrak, Staggers Deregulation Act, FRA fines and rules enforcement, assault on FELA, The Railroad Retirement Improvement Act, Railway Labor Act, Etc...) Each of these items are the direct result of legislation – NOT negotiations with these entities.

The purpose of the TXPAC (Texas Political Action Committee) is to raise funds on a voluntary basis to assist candidates for office who are favorable to the BLET, railroad labor in general, and the industry. Dues money cannot be used for this purpose because of federal law restrictions. Many members contributing through their dues payment are not aware of this regulation.

The important point to remember is only voluntary contributions may be used for PAC purposes.

The PAC fund needs your support to insure the interests of our members are being protected to the fullest extent possible.

PAC membership starts as little as $5 per month, a very small sum for such a priceless investment. In light of these facts, I urge all members to consider membership in the TX-PAC Fund. Visit our website for more information or call your local secretary/treasurer.