

# Call to action: 13(c) protections under attack

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Legislation now being considered by the Congress could slash job and income protection for transit employees, and, eventually, bus, rail and commuter employees.

The legislation is S. 1072, which, along with companion H.R. 3550, is being considered by a joint congressional conference committee made up of House and Senate members. The next step will be for the legislation to be voted on in the House and Senate chambers.

UTU members are urged to telephone and e-mail their member of Congress and both U.S. senators and ask that they oppose any legislative language that would negatively affect Section 13(c) protective arrangements for transit employees, said UTU National Legislative Director James Brunkenhoefer.

Tell them that the negative language is being considered in the highway bill now before a House-Senate conference committee.

So-called Section 13(c) protective arrange-

ments come from a provision in the Federal Transit Act. The protective arrangements provide that employees of federally subsidized transit companies impacted by a change in operators will not lose any rights or benefits.

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This means no loss of collective bargaining rights, pension benefits, seniority, vacation, sick days, personal leave or travel passes. Also, the employees will not suffer a reduction in earnings, and will have a priority of re-employment if there is a layoff or job elimination. And, they will be

guaranteed paid training or re-training as necessary to hold jobs.

These transit-employee protections extend for a period of six years following a change in operator and are administered by the U.S. Department of Labor.

“Although separate six-year labor protections exist for Amtrak and freight railroad employees, those protections also would be at risk if Section 13(c) protective arrangements for transit employees are diluted by Congress,” Brunkenhoefer said.

The legislation being considered now by the conference committee would reduce existing transit-employee protective arrangements from six years to four years.

To find the names, telephone numbers and e-mail addresses of your U.S. congressman and U.S. senators, go to the UTU website home page, [www.utu.org](http://www.utu.org). Look to the left in the red area and click on “Washington Updates.” Then click on “Contacting Congress” and follow instructions.

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