

UNIFIED SYSTEM DIVISION  
BROTHERHOOD OF MAINTENANCE OF WAY EMPLOYEES DIVISION  
INTERNATIONAL BROTHERHOOD OF TEAMSTERS



August 7, 2020

## IMPORTANT VOTE

To All Unified System Division and Allied Federation Members:

This letter is regarding the attached agreement proposal dated June 13, 2019. This agreement was negotiated to modify the Schedules for System Gangs within the 2012 Local/National Agreement to allow an 8 and 6 schedule. The "8 and 6 Agreement" avoided the 9 and 6 schedules that the Carrier was going to impose. The 8 and 6 Agreement provides the following:

*"Unless modified by the mutual agreement of the parties, this special agreement will expire at 11:59 PM on December 31, 2020, and all currently existing agreement provisions will again take effect at 12:00 AM on January 1, 2021. In the event this special agreement expires, employees will not be permitted an exercise of seniority during the initial reversion back to work date options found in Section (a) of the CCHWP schedule portion of the 2012 Local/National Agreement."*

General Chairman Dennis Albers (MOPAC) and General Chairman Tony Cardwell (UP North) have agreed that because both BMWED Federations are signatory to the 8 and 6 schedule agreement, we will calculate votes together. Also, we want all members to be informed concerning their vote and will provide information for you to review before casting your vote. We must receive a vote back from the majority of the members to have a real understanding of the membership's views. If we do not receive 50% of the ballots back, the vote will not be counted.

It is essential to know that if the membership votes to proceed with this agreement, there must be a few changes to improve the 8 and 6 schedules. Below are a couple of important issues that we will fight for if the yes vote prevails.

1. The membership has expressed a need to change the 8 and 6 schedules to Wednesday to Wednesday. This allows for better-priced flights and more accessible travel.
2. The Carrier has tried to change schedules on 8 and 6 schedules from what is known as "Z5 to Z6" or vice versa. The agreement should be amended before this change, as no agreement provision allows this change. There must be benefits for the membership when this change is made, and there we must maintain "walk-off" provisions if an agreement is negotiated.

It is important that you fully understand that if the agreement does not continue that the Carrier will revert to 9 and 6 schedules. This action will take the unions back to a dispute and likely end in arbitration. Arbitration is a lengthy process. We will do our best to expedite arbitration, but there are no guarantees. If this fight proceeds, it will be difficult and complicated but not impossible; however, there are no guarantees in arbitration. If the arbitration is won, then schedules could revert to a traditional compressed half. If arbitration were lost, 9 and 6 and other damaging schedules would be imposed.

The number one question asked is, how long could it take? Arbitration can take 4-5 years. If we were successful in expediting the arbitration, it may only be approximately two years.

The Union leadership position is clear. We think the agreement should continue, and the yes vote will ultimately prevail. This is not because we do not want the fight. Instead, it is because continuing the 8 and 6 agreement is the sure thing.

Enclosed, you will find a ballot with a prepaid envelope. Please follow the instructions on the ballot and cast your vote accordingly. Place the ballot in the envelope and put it in the mail. The vote must be received by September 9<sup>th</sup>, 2020.

Fraternally Yours,



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Tony Cardwell  
General Chairman



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Dennis Albers  
General Chairman