



TEAMSTER *News*

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BLET TEAMSTERS & UNION COALITION WIN HISTORIC STRIKE AT LIRR

3,500 Worker Walkout Forces Railroad to Offer Fair Contract

(NEW YORK) – Teamsters with the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen (BLET) and their union coalition have reached a tentative agreement with Long Island Rail Road (LIRR) to end the carrier’s first strike in over three decades. The agreement provides workers with raises that maintain their standard of living while strengthening work rules and improving benefits.

“BLET Teamsters and their brothers and sisters across four other unions just showed this entire country what worker solidarity looks like in action,” said Teamsters General President Sean M. O’Brien. “These union railroaders made it clear from the start they would not accept a deal that shortchanged them and undercut their standard of living. For three long days they bravely withheld their labor on picket lines across the New York metropolitan area. Every worker in America is reminded of what can be achieved through courage and conviction to fight for a better way of life.”

Thousands of workers from five unions were forced to strike by the Metropolitan Transportation Authority’s (MTA) refusal to offer them a fair contract. BLET Teamsters and their coalition partners set up picket lines at major LIRR hubs immediately after midnight on Saturday, May 16.

“This victory was won by union members who stood their ground and refused to be pushed around,” said Mark Wallace, President of the BLET and the Teamsters Rail Conference. “Our coalition showed the MTA that railroad workers will fight for the respect, pay, and protections we’ve earned. Their unity and determination forced this railroad to finally deliver a fair agreement.”

“BLET Teamsters and our coalition brothers and sisters made countless sacrifices as we bargained in good faith for a new agreement. After years of negotiations, we’ve finally received an agreement that reflects the value our members bring to this railroad,” said Kevin Sexton, Vice President of the BLET. “It is heartbreaking that the MTA made our communities and our passengers pay the price for their mismanagement. We thank the people of New York for their patience and support.”

The coalition spent years bargaining with the MTA for a new agreement. The process included two Presidential Emergency Boards that ruled in favor of the unions. In that time, workers went without raises as inflation ate away their standard of living.

“We are pleased to see this strike come to a close. BLET Teamsters and our coalition did everything in our power to avoid going to the picket line. But the MTA and the LIRR left us with no other option,” said Gil Lang, General Chairman of the BLET’s LIRR General Committee. “It’s hard to describe how proud I am of my brothers and sisters for sticking together to win this fight. Our entire coalition displayed an unmatched level of solidarity. And we now have a fair agreement to show for it.”

The LIRR is the busiest commuter railroad in America, with 300,000 daily passengers. The Teamsters represent over 500 of the LIRR’s locomotive engineers.

Founded in 1903, the International Brotherhood of Teamsters represents 1.3 million hardworking people in the U.S., Canada, and Puerto Rico. Visit [Teamster.org](https://www.teamster.org) for more information. Follow us on X [@Teamsters](https://twitter.com/Teamsters) and on Facebook at [Facebook.com/teamsters](https://www.facebook.com/teamsters).

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