



OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

NEWS RELEASE

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GOVERNOR WHITMAN, NEW JERSEY BUSINESSES WARN OF ECONOMIC IMPACT OF AMTRAK STRIKE; CALL AGAIN ON WASHINGTON TO RESOLVE LABOR DISPUTE

Governor Christie Whitman was joined by New Jersey business leaders today in calling on Washington to avert a federal Amtrak strike, which will cripple the many New Jersey businesses that rely on Amtrak rail lines to receive materials and transport their products, and disrupt thousands of commuters.

"The lives and livelihoods of thousands of New Jerseyans would be seriously disrupted. A week from today, the entire Northeast region of the country could be struck by a transportation calamity," said Whitman, who was joined by New Jersey Business and Industry Association President Joseph Gonzalez, New Jersey Chamber of Commerce President Joan Verplank and other representatives from the business community. "At least 27 major New Jersey firms would be seriously affected by this strike."

Major companies that would be affected by disruption of service on Amtrak's Northeast Corridor line due to a strike include Union Bag, Trenton Folding Box, National Can, American Standard, Delco Battery and Heidi Candy and other consumer giants in the region such as Kellogg Foods, Proctor & Gamble, Home Depot and Budweiser (see attached list for other businesses that would be affected). Altogether, more than 300 companies in the region would be affected, 27 of which are Fortune 500 firms.

"Thousands of workers could be idled, and many more thousands of consumers could face shortages, said Whitman. "So from the time you start the day with a bowl of Corn Flakes until you sit down with a bowl to chips to watch Monday Night Football, you're going to feel the impact of this strike."

"Today, I again call on the President and the Congressional leadership to exercise the powers of their offices to prevent this nightmare. If, by this time next Tuesday, it becomes obvious that this cooling-off period hasn't led to a settlement, extend it."

"And let me reiterate, this is a federal strike," Whitman said. "The President and the Congress can and should resolve this before it hurts hundreds of thousands of Americans."

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