

IBEW **LOCAL UNION 589**

INTERNATIONAL BROTHERHOOD OF ELECTRICAL WORKERS

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Brothers and Sisters,

I am certain by now that most of you have seen the headlines. Your leadership, along with our labor coalition partners, have decided to request a Presidential Emergency Board (PEB) from the White House. Rarely do labor organizations request PEBs but in this case it is the prudent thing to do. The LIRR and MTA have deliberately attempted to bate us into a strike during these early phases of the process. While our frustrations are real and our cause is just, striking at this moment would do more harm than good. A strike could jeopardize public support, strain our members financially, and would give the LIRR and MTA another excuse not to engage in productive discussions (a copy of my statement to the press yesterday is attached).

I want to thank all of you for your overwhelming support throughout this process and a special thanks for your authorization of a legal strike should it be deemed necessary by your leadership.

As we enter into the next 120-day cooling off period and await the formation of the PEB, our labor coalition remains steadfast and united towards our goal of getting all of you the fair contract you deserve.

We are stronger when we are strategic and right now patience and unity with our coalition partners at the table will serve us far better than walking off the job.

In Solidarity,
Jeffrey Klein, General Chairman
IBEW L.U. 589

Good afternoon. My Name is Jeff Klein. I am the General Chairman of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local 589. I have the honor of representing the nearly 1,000 electricians who work every day on the LIRR to ensure that the riding public gets to where they need to go safely and comfortably.

That being said, it's unfortunate that we are here. It's unfortunate that the Long Island Railroad has spent more time over the past several days negotiating in the press than it has spent in the last 2 years negotiating with this labor coalition. The LIRR would rather negotiate in the headlines than at the bargaining table. That is simple fact.

They have intentionally misled the public of our position in an attempt to build public resentment against the very employees they claim to revere. Not too long ago our Coalition's members were heralded by the LIRR as, "Heroes Moving Heroes." How soon they forget.

So, let's be clear: Contrary to what you've been told by the LIRR and MTA, the coalition has accepted the same 3-year deal that other unions have already agreed to.

You heard that right-- We've accepted it. All we are seeking is a fourth year that would provide modest wage gains allowing our members to maintain their purchasing power, by keeping pace with inflation and their heads above water. That's a principle every hard-working New Yorker can relate to and appreciate. Only at the LIRR is that a foreign concept. Only at the LIRR is that unreasonable.

Instead of negotiating with us the LIRR and MTA have shamelessly chosen to stoke fear into the hearts and minds of the riding public by casting the shadow of a looming strike over the very people they pledge to serve.

In closing I would like to say, Governor Hochul, if you are watching... Give our members the fair contract you know they deserve.