

Freddie N. Simpson
Acting President



Perry K. Geller, Sr.
Acting Secretary- Treasurer

Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Employees

Affiliated with the AFL-CIO and CLC

August 23, 2004

Dear Brothers and Sisters:

I am pleased to announce that the BMWÉ and the International Brotherhood of Teamsters (IBT) have reached an agreement to merge our two unions, subject to ratification by a vote of the BMWÉ membership. I would like to take this opportunity to speak to you member-to-member about how important this merger vote is for your future and the future of BMWÉ. I believe this merger is a good thing for you, your family, and for our great Union. I encourage you to learn all the facts about the merger and discuss it with your co-workers, your spouse and your friends. I know that once you do, you will be convinced, as I and your Grand Lodge Officers are convinced, that a merger between the BMWÉ and the Teamsters is good for you, good for your union, and good for all of Rail Labor.

This merger is all about you, the membership of the BMWÉ. The directive to merge was issued to the Grand Lodge Officers in 1998 and reaffirmed in 2002 by the directly elected convention delegates from BMWÉ Local Lodges throughout North America. Your elected delegates adopted resolutions mandating that the Grand Lodge find a suitable merger partner for BMWÉ. The convention delegates are the rank-and-file heart and soul of this Union, and the gathering of the directly elected delegates in convention constitutes the highest authority of this Brotherhood under our Constitution and Bylaws. It is members like you, through your duly elected Local Lodge delegates, who have directed the Grand Lodge to find a merger partner. Our union's continuing efforts to follow your mandate and find a worthy merger partner reflects the wisdom of the rank-and-file of our great union. You and your fellow workers understand that we must join with a bigger and stronger union to better protect the interests of maintenance of way workers throughout North America. And in my opinion, there is no stronger or more powerful union for us to join forces with than the International Brotherhood of Teamsters.

As President of the BMWÉ, I believe in full disclosure of all the facts surrounding this merger. As such, I intend to communicate with you directly over the weeks ahead to assure that you have all the factual information necessary to make an informed decision. And when your merger documents and ballot arrives in a few weeks, I encourage you to join me in voting in favor of the BMWÉ/Teamsters merger.

This merger is all about the membership of BMWWE, and you know full well what's at stake. In November, BMWWE will serve "Section 6" contract demands on the railroads to begin the 2005 round of National bargaining. The question you must ask yourself is, "should BMWWE try to go it alone at the contract bargaining table, or would we be better off joining the Teamsters Rail Conference and standing side-by-side with the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen as fellow Teamsters?" Of course you already know the answer to that question, and you know that there is strength in numbers and strength in unity. However, in the end only you can decide whether BMWWE will join together with the International Brotherhood of Teamsters, the most powerful transportation union in North America.

This merger will unite two proud unions with long histories in the transportation industry working to protect and increase the power of transportation labor. The Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers already have joined the Teamsters, and with BMWWE voting to join the Teamsters Rail Conference, over 40 percent of Rail Labor will be united in one union, speaking with one voice for the rank-and-file. I firmly believe that other rail unions will follow our lead and also seek to join with the BLE and BMWWE within the Teamsters Rail Conference. Let us wisely consider this opportunity for genuine Rail Labor unity and collective bargaining strength. As a fellow member of BMWWE, I encourage you to educate yourself about the merger, ask questions, and discuss the merger with your fellow railroad workers. Then, when your ballot arrives in a few weeks, I ask you to join with me and your fellow workers and vote for hope, vote for unity, and vote for the BMWWE/Teamsters merger.

In Solidarity,

Freddie N. Simpson
Acting President