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# Locomotive engineers shut down New Jersey Transit

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NJ Transit engineers are on strike. SLL photo: Stephen Millies

May 16 — Four hundred fifty members of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen went on strike at 12:01 a.m. today against New Jersey Transit. The railroad workers, who belong to the International Brotherhood of Teamsters, have been without a wage increase since 2019 despite prices and rent going through the

roof.

NJ Transit engineers are being paid \$10 less per hour than other engineers on Amtrak, Long Island, and Metro North railroads. The strikers often use the same tracks, serve the same stations, obey the same signals and follow the same rules as their Amtrak counterparts, yet they are paid far less.

On the final day, union negotiators held a 15-hour bargaining session with management, but the railroad bosses refused to budge.

New Jersey Gov. Phil Murphy, a Democrat, apologized to the over 100,000 railroad commuters affected by the strike, blaming the workers for the shutdown. It's Murphy and his corporate backers who have forced these workers to strike.

Murphy doesn't have to worry about frozen wages and rising rents. In 2024, the former Wall Street bankster [reported income](#) of \$1.4 million, double his take from the year before.

While management claims the union demands are unaffordable, they spent \$500 million on their lavish new headquarters. Just the \$53 million spent on interior decoration could have paid for the engineers' demands twice over.

Murphy and NJ Transit management are refusing to bargain in good faith because they fear being forced to give wage justice to other railroad workers, too.

The union members I met today in front of Pennsylvania Station in New York City were strong and confident. Railroaders remember how Congress schemed with the freight railroads in 2022 to stop a strike.

The struggle of the NJ Transit engineers shows the way forward for millions of other workers at Amazon and Walmart. Victory to the strikers!

*Stephen Millies is a retired Amtrak worker and a member of the American Train Dispatchers Association and Transportation Communications International Union.*

