

INTRODUCTION: MY NAME IS DAVE ROCK FROM MENTOR, MINNESOTA. I AM THE CWA LOCAL 7304 PRESIDENT AND AN EMPLOYEE OF NEW FLYER OF AMERICA LOCATED IN CROOKSTON MN.

WELCOME CHAIRMAN OBERSTAR, AND MINORITY REPRESENTATIVE JOHN MICA, POLICY MAKERS AND COMMITTEE MEN, IT IS A GREAT HONOR TO BE IN WASHINGTON AND TO SPEAK WITH YOU TODAY.

NEW FLYER IS A COMPANY BASED OUT OF CANADA, A TRANSIT BUS SUPPLIER ESTABLISHED IN 1930 AS WESTERN AUTO AND TRUCK BODY LIMITED.

IN 1941 THE COMPANY INTRODUCED THE "WESTERN FLYER". THE COMPANY WAS RENAMED FLYER INDUSTRIES LIMITED IN 1986 AND THEN RENAMED TO NEW FLYER.

OVER THE NEXT 15 YEARS, NEW FLYER ESTABLISHED A SOLID REPUTATION FOR INNOVATION IN DESIGN THROUGH THE DEVELOPMENT OF NEW PRODUCTS.

IN 1996 NEW FLYER OF AMERICA OPENED A PLANT IN CROOKSTON, MN. THIS ALLOWED THEM TO BE A BUY AMERICA COMPANY. GROWTH WAS FAST, AND IN 1999 NEW FLYER OPENED AN ASSEMBLY PLANT IN ST CLOUD, MN. THIS CREATED OVER 850 DIRECT LABOR JOBS IN THESE TWO COMMUNITIES.

IN THE 1990'S THE CNG AND LNG NATURAL GAS PROPELLED BUSES WERE BUILT AT THE CROOKSTON, MN PLANT. NATURAL GAS BEING A CLEAN BURNING FUEL TECHNOLOGY TO THIS DAY IS STILL A BIG PART OF NEW FLYER OPERATION.

LATER IN 2002, NEW FLYER SECURED AN ORDER TO BUILD NORTH AMERICA'S FIRST FLEET OF 218 ARTICULATED DIESEL/HYBRID BUSES FOR KING COUNTY METRO IN SEATTLE, WA. ESTABLISHING NEW FLYER AS THE LEADER IN HYBRID BUS PRODUCTION, THE BUSES WERE DELIVERED IN 2004. DURING THIS TIME, NEW FLYER PARTNERED WITH SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY, CA TO BUILD THE FIRST GASOLINE-ELECTRIC HYBRID BUSES.

IN 2004 ELECTRIC TROLLEY BUSES WERE BUILT FOR VANCOUVER IN BRITISH COLUMBIA. BC TRANSIT IN 2007 AWARDED NEW FLYER THE CONTRACT TO BUILD THE WORLD'S FIRST FLEET OF HYDROGEN FUEL CELL BUSES. THE FIRST OF THESE BUSES WERE DELIVERED IN 2008 AND THE REMAINDER WAS BUILT IN 2009. THE FLEET WAS HIGHLIGHTED AT THE 2010 WINTER OLYMPICS IN WHISTLER, BC. (A BALLARD FUEL CELL AND A SIEMAN ELECTRIC DRIVE WERE USED).

ENOUGH NEW FLYER HISTORY, LETS TALK ABOUT ME. I WAS BORN TO A THIRD GENERATION FARMER IN THE FRENCH SPEAKING COMMUNITY OF TERREBONNE, MINNESOTA.

I GRADUATED IN 1971 AND ATTENDED TECHNICAL COLLEGE FOR ELECTRICAL. IN 1974 I PURCHASED 320 ACRES OF LAND AND 11,000 LAYING HENS, GOT MARRIED THAT SAME YEAR, I GUESS I NEEDED HELP WITH THOSE CHICKENS. IN 1978 I EXPANDED TO 400 ACRES AND INCREASING THE FLOCK TO 20,000. HAVING MY FIRST OF FOUR CHILDREN THAT YEAR, AT TWENTY FIVE YEARS OF AGE I THOUGHT I WAS SITTING ON TOP OF THE WORLD. MY EXPERIENCE WITH A BAD ECONOMY BEGAN IN THE 1980'S WITH BAD COMMODITY PRICES. I RENTED EVERYTHING OUT IN 1992. I FOUND A JOB AT A COMBUSTABLE WASTE AND RECYCLING CENTER WHERE I RECEIVED TRAINING FOR BOILER OPERATOR AND EPA COMBUSTOR LICENSING. IN 1998 I WAS ACCEPTED AT NEW FLYER FOR A MAINTENANCE POSITION. LESS THAN A YEAR HAD PASSED AND I APPLIED FOR AN ELECTRICAL POSITION AND GOT IT. NEW FLYER TECHNOLOGY WAS CHANGING FAST AND I HAD TO LEARN TO KEEP UP.

AS I STATED EARLIER, IN 2002 DIESEL/HYBRID BUSES WERE INTRODUCED AND I BECAME ONE OF TWO ELECTRICIANS EVER IN THE UNITED STATES TO BUILD DIESEL/HYBRID BUSES IN A PRODUCTION LINE ENVIRONMENT. I REPRESENT OVER 800 UNION EMPLOYEES AT THESE TWO PLANTS. ALL WHICH HAVE EXPERIENCED THE TECHNOLOGY AND TRAINING NEEDED TO MOVE FROM FARMER, STORE CLERK, WAITRESS, COMMON LABORER, AND ETC WITH THE ABILITY TO HAVE HEALTH INSURANCE AND THE MANY BENEFITS THAT COME WITH A GREAT COMPANY LIKE THIS IN OUR COMMUNITY.

IN 2009 I MET WITH VICE PRESIDENT JOE BIDEN AND SEVERAL OTHER CABINET MEMBERS WHEN THEY KICKED OFF THE STRONG MIDDLES CLASS INITIATIVE AT THE ST. CLOUD MINNESTOA PLANT IN MARCH.

NEW FLYER HAS RECEIVED ORDERS FROM 17 DIFFERENT TRANSIT AGENCIES TOTALING 638 EQUIVALENT UNITS THAT ARE TIED DIRECTLY TO ARRA FUNDING. THESE INCLUDE CHICAGO; PHILADELPHIA; SEATTLE; WASHINGTON, DC; DAVIS, CA; ROCHESTER, NY; MILWAUKEE; CHARLESTON, SC; DETROIT; BOSTON; HONOLULU; CINCINNATI; MIAMI; NEW ORLEANS; FARGO, ND; MOORHEAD, MN; AND GARDENA, CA. MANY OF THESE BUSES WOULD NOT HAVE BEEN PURCHASED WITHOUT THE AVAILABILITY OF ARRA FUNDING.

IT HAS BECOME APPARENT TO ME, THE CRISIS OF FINANCING FOR CITY GOVERNMENTS HAS BECOME BURDENSOME AND ALMOST CRIPPLING. WE BELIEVE THAT MAINTAINING AND OPERATING THESE VEHICLES IS ALL THESE CITIES CAN HANDLE.

I ENCOURAGE THE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE TO SUPPORT FINANCING THAT WOULD ALLEVIATE THE PRESSURE OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENTS LIMITED PURCHASING ABILITIES. THIS WOULD IN TURN CREATE THE NECESSARY JOBS, AND THE HOPE AND FUTURE OF THE INDUSTRY THAT WE AS LABORERS DEEM SO IMPORTANT FOR OUR FAMILIES IN RURAL AMERICA.

REMEMBER EACH UNIT THAT IS ADDED TO THE DAILY PRODUCTION CREATES NINE MORE JOBS. ONCE AGAIN THESE ARE THE BIG TIME JOBS IN SMALL TOWN AMERICA THAT WE HAVE ALWAYS WISHED FOR. SO KEEP THE DREAM ALIVE AND HELP US SUPPLY EVERYBODY WITH A GOOD MEANS OF PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION.

I WOULD LIKE THANK CHAIRMAN OBERSTAR AND REPRESENTIVE MICA FOR THIS INVITATION TO TELL OUR STORY.

DAVE ROCK
NEW FLYER ELECTRICIAN