



Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen

A Division of the Rail Conference of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters

BLET relaunches Perrien Fund to assist members with Hurricane Harvey relief

INDEPENDENCE, Ohio, August 30 — The BLET's National Division Advisory Board approved a recommendation from BLET National President Dennis R. Pierce today to re-activate and expand its Gary Perrien Fund to provide financial assistance to members living in Texas and Louisiana who have been the hardest hit by Hurricane Harvey.

The Gary Perrien Fund was originally established by action of the delegates at BLET's Second National Convention in 2010. Brother Gary Perrien, then an active member serving on the Convention's Arrangements Committee, fell ill and the delegates passed the hat to assist in his recovery. In a televised report back to the convention from his hospital bed, Brother Perrien asked that the funds be used to help those more needy than him, leading the delegates and the Advisory Board to later create the Gary Perrien Fund. Brother Perrien recovered and retired in the years following the 2010 Convention.

As part of the expansion of the Fund, the BLET Advisory Board also authorized President Pierce's request that \$20,000.00 be transferred from the Union's General Fund to the Perrien Fund as part of the associated fund raising effort on behalf of the Union's members harmed by the storm. "BLET members have suffered catastrophic losses as a result of the storm," President Pierce said. "The union movement is built around members helping members, and the National Division is starting this fund raising program in an effort to help as many members who have suffered a hardship as is possible."

The Advisory Board has also asked all BLET General Committees of Adjustment, State Legislative Boards, Divisions, and individual members to make matching donations to at least double the size of its initial contribution. "We know that there are members who want to assist their Brothers and Sisters who have been harmed by the storm," President Pierce said. "One hundred percent of the money raised through this effort will go directly to as many members as possible."

In addition, the Advisory Board also approved President Pierce's recommendation that BLET make a matching \$20,000.00 donation to the International Brotherhood of Teamsters Disaster Relief Fund. "This fund was established to assist as many Teamster Brothers and Sisters as possible, and as fellow Teamsters we are proud to join in that effort," President Pierce said.

On behalf of the Advisory Board, President Dennis Pierce also thanked Brother Gary Pedigo, Chairman of BLET's Texas State Legislative Board, for reaching out to the National Division and requesting that action be taken to assist our BLET Brothers and Sisters in their time of need. Brother Pedigo reports that members from at least 10 BLET Division have been impacted by the storm, including members whose homes are a total loss.

To make an online donation to the Gary Perrien Fund, the National Division has established the following website to accept contributions from General Committees of Adjustment, State Legislative Boards, Divisions, and individual members:

<https://www.ble-t.org/perrien> (<https://www.ble-t.org/perrien>)

Also, checks can be made payable to the "Gary Perrien Medical Relief Fund" and mailed to:

Perrien Fund–Harvey Relief
BLET National Division
7061 East Pleasant Valley Road
Independence, OH 44131

Donations are not tax deductible.

BLET members impacted by Hurricane Harvey can begin the process of applying for Perrien Fund assistance by contacting Kelly Rowe of the BLET National Division at: rowe@ble-t.org (<mailto:rowe@ble-t.org>). Only BLET members in good standing at the time of the disaster are eligible to apply for assistance from the Perrien Fund. BLET members living in certain Texas counties are also eligible to apply for assistance from the Teamsters Disaster Relief Fund (<https://www.ble-t.org/disaster> (<https://www.ble-t.org/disaster>)).

"I must say it again, for over 154 years now, our Brotherhood has existed on the principle of members helping members," President Pierce said. "I challenge all our General Committees of Adjustment, State Legislative Boards, Divisions, and individual members to continue that tradition today by helping our Brothers and Sisters in Texas and Louisiana during their time of need."

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