

Amtrak responds after gay couple is verbally assaulted by unruly passenger

<https://ktla.com/news/local-news/amtrak-responds-after-gay-couple-is-verbally-assaulted-by-unruly-passenger/>

by: Carlos Saucedo, Travis Schlepp

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Amtrak says it “strongly condemns” an act of hate that occurred on board one of their trains last week after an unruly passenger directed a hate-filled rant at a family of four.

Robbie Pierce and Neal Broverman were riding the Amtrak train with their two foster kids last Tuesday when another passenger, a complete stranger, began yelling at the parents and the children.

The man’s tirade featured hateful slurs and rhetoric which he screamed at the family who were traveling to Oakland from Los Angeles.

“They stole you ... They’re pedophiles ... They’re rapists ... They’re murderous ... They’re an abomination,” Pierce and Broverman recalled the man saying.

The verbal assault went on for several minutes before Pierce took the children to a different train car.

“When I stood up, I thought he might hit me,” Pierce told KTLA. “He might have a weapon, but it was important to get him away from the kids at that moment.”

But the man continued to yell at the couple and their kids, accusing them of being a fake family as the two children cried.

Amtrak employees eventually stepped in and the man was removed from the train in San Jose with the help of local sheriff’s deputies.

Authorities said the man was not arrested and he has not been identified.

Amtrak sent a statement to KTLA that reads:

Amtrak strongly condemns this reprehensible act of hate. To ensure our customers feel valued and respected when riding our trains, we are conducting a full investigation on this incident. This includes potentially banning the customer from future Amtrak ridership.

STATEMENT FROM AMTRAK

Pierce and Broverman said their children were traumatized by the vicious tirade and they hope telling their story will bring attention to the hatred and dangerous biases many LGBTQ families still face.

“People harbor a lot of prejudgments and ignorance about families like ours and I just want that to end,” Broverman said.

Pierce echoed the statement, saying he looks forward to the day when families like theirs can go about their lives without having to worry about being confronted by complete strangers.

“I just wish we had a world where LGBT families could just ride the train and not be harassed,” Pierce said.