ATU MOST VALUABLE INTERNATIONAL UNION

With their aggressively progressive approach to fighting for local and regional services, the 190,000 members of ATU are a force to be reckoned with in debates about economic and social justice.
**NEWS BRIEFS**

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**News Briefs**

**ATU, coalition advocate more transit in Minnesota.** ATU joined transit advocates in St. Paul to lobby for bills that would expand mass transit in Minnesota. Members of Transit for a Stronger Economy, a coalition of 51 groups, are promoting bills in the Minnesota legislature that would raise sales taxes in the Twin Cities area, provide dedicated funding for state transit systems and bicycle and pedestrian lanes, and redirect state revenue toward a “comprehensive ‘build-out’” of public transit in the North Star State.

**Portland GM latest to sing from the ‘blame ATU’ songbook.** In what will come as a surprise to no one, the general manager of Portland, OR’s TriMet transit system is blaming Local 757 for the agency’s budget problems, saying ATU members have, “the most generous health care benefits in the country.” This tune will sound familiar to many ATU locals who’ve heard it sung by agency heads just before contract negotiations. Local 757 says the agency should look to cut management’s excessive salaries instead, which should happen right after pigs sprout wings on Oregon farms.

**Wake-up call? Transportation workers rank last in wellbeing.** Transportation workers have the lowest overall wellbeing scores in the United States, according to a Gallup report. In what should be a wake-up call for many of us, Gallup reported that transportation workers have the highest level of obesity and the third-highest smoking rate among the occupations measured. This combination puts transportation workers at the highest risk for developing chronic conditions such as diabetes and heart disease and makes them more susceptible to cancer than workers in other occupations.

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Subscription: USA and Canada, $5 a year. Single copy: 50 cents. All others: $10 a year. Published bimonthly by the Amalgamated Transit Union, Editor: Shawn Perry, Designer: Paul A. Fitzgerald. Editorial Office: 5025 Wisconsin Ave., NW, Washington, DC 20016-4139. Tel: 1-202-537-1645. Please send all requests for address changes to the ATU Registry Dept. ISSN: 0019-3291. PUBLICATIONS MAIL AGREEMENT NO: 40033961. RETURN UNDELIVERABLE CANADIAN ADDRESSES TO: APC Postal Logistics, LLC, PO Box 503, RPG, West Beaver Creek, Richmond Hill ON L4B 4R6.
We all know some people who have arms so long they spend lots of time patting themselves on the back. Sometimes we in the union movement have been known to sing our own praises too.

No shock there; as leaders in democratic organizations, if our members don’t know what we do – we don’t get elected. As former New York Governor Mario Cuomo used to say, “in politics if you don’t blow your own horn, sometimes there’s no music.”

But it’s really nice when someone else does it.

‘Most Valuable International Union’

Much to my surprise one night in late December I received an email from a friend congratulating me on the ATU – our Union – being named, “Most Valuable International Union of 2012” in the annual Progressive Honor Roll of The Nation magazine. (The Nation is the oldest continuously published weekly magazine in the United States – since 1865).

There are over 70 international unions in the United States and Canada, so to be singled-out as the most progressive is a high and prestigious honor.

‘A force to be reckoned with’

Here’s part of what they said about why we stood out from the pack: “With their Occupy Transit T-shirts and aggressively progressive approach to fighting for local and regional services, the 190,000 members of ATU are a force to be reckoned with in debates about economic and social justice.”

What a wonderful thing to hear about our Union! All thanks to hundreds of hard working ATU officers and thousands of our dedicated members.

I really feel it was well deserved. Our troubles have multiplied over the last few years but so have our efforts.

In 2012, your local union leaders organized events, mobilized passengers, hit the streets and worked hard in the U.S. national election to re-elect President Obama, and elect many transit-friendly candidates like Sen. Elizabeth Warren and Rep. Tammy Duckworth.

Proud to be ATU!

Campaigns are always led by a small group of dedicated members. But the growing number of ATU rank and file members who are involved is impressive – not only to us, but to opinion makers all over the United States and Canada.

Thank you and congratulations. As a member for more than 34 years, I have never been more proud. The future of working people depends on unions and ATU stands in the forefront of the fight everywhere.
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   A Voice on the Job
Wow, time has flown and this year we are preparing for the 57th Convention of the Amalgamated Transit Union!

These last three years have been remarkable and we have faced every obstacle imaginable. Our very existence has been challenged; state by state we have had to fight everything from completely losing our collective bargaining rights, devastating legislation thrown at us from the Right Wingers (who are really out of touch with society) to right to work.

In Canada we have had essential service legislation thrown at us, deregulation of our over-the-road members and right-to-work bills from the Wild Rose Party. The richest 2% of the world have done nothing but blame working women and men for all their problems. Did I say problems? Oh! I meant to say stopping them from making more and more off the backs of workers.

Hey Mr. Millionaire and Billionaire, maybe you should wake up before it is too late and realize how you got where you are today.

Where would we be?

Remember when Mitt Romney said corporations are people too? Maybe we can interpret that statement a little better for him. Without the people (workers) there would be no corporations.

Without working men and women and their families bonding together and sacrificing everyday, where we would we all be?

Without our sons and daughters going off to foreign soils to protect our freedom – and sometimes paying the supreme sacrifice – where would we be?

Wake-up you idiots! Show the respect that working women and men deserve, and then we can truly be great again – all over North America and around the world.

One thing you can be sure of is, as long as we have to, we will continue to fight for the rights and benefits of our members.

Please remember as long as we are dedicated to serve we will be determined to succeed.

In Solidarity,

Robert H. Baker, Jr.
Bob Baker
International Executive Vice President
Since its publication in 2007, *Shock Doctrine*, a book by Canadian author Naomi Klein, has opened the eyes of readers to the tactics used by the rich and powerful to get what they want at the expense of the poor and middle class around the world.

In the book Klein describes how the wealthy who never think they have enough, use the shock caused by real or contrived disasters to pass authoritarian laws and austerity budgets to effect a greater transfer of wealth and power from the 99% to the 1%.

The shock can be anything that shakes our sense of security. Attacks such as 9/11, and economic disasters such as the Great Recession are the pretexts used to make drastic changes that citizens are told must be made now to remedy the situation and avoid even greater cataclysm.

And so 9/11 was used as a reason to erode American civil liberties, and the Great Recession is being used to pass austerity budgets that cut things that people really need so that the taxes of the rich can remain criminally low.

Klein calls this “disaster capitalism,” but the technique is also used to enact laws favorable to the well-off that could not have been passed otherwise – something I call “disaster legislating.”

**Intransigence**

The latest example of this has been playing out in the U.S. Congress for some time now. Republican intransigence on everything from budgets to political appointments appears to push the nation to the edge of one catastrophe after another.

In this way conservative types hope to achieve legislative goals that they couldn’t under ordinary circumstances. They hold the nation hostage over debt ceilings, fiscal cliffs and sequesters by blocking vital legislation until responsible Members give in – not willing to subject their constituents to the consequences of inaction.

The filibuster – the favorite tool of Senate reactionaries – ensures that the will of the minority will prevail on any bill 40 senators don’t like. And the Speaker of the House dares not allow a bill to come to the floor that the tea party opposes, even if he knows that a majority of House Members favor it.

**‘Chicken’**

The GOP prefers to play a reckless game of “chicken” rather than put people back to work and really get our economy moving again.

And these cowardly corporate flunkies have the gall to blame people earning “too much money” for our nation’s woes while so many workers can’t even make a living wage.

Fortunately, however, voters seem to be catching on. They’re weary of the constant crises devised by petulant politicians who sit on their hands until they get what they and only they want.

Workers want good jobs, not handouts. They want to be able to have a sense of pride in their ability to provide for their families. They want their dignity back.

But GOP members seem to have the sensitivity of Nero who, as the tale goes, “fiddled while Rome burned,” and blamed it on others.

Don’t be fooled. Demand that your representatives in Congress take you and your family’s financial wellbeing seriously.

And if they don’t – you know what to do at election time.
The birthplace of the civil rights movement – Atlanta – has become ground zero in the fight against the anti-union forces attempting to privatize transit systems across the country. And ATU Local 732 and its allies have been waging a comprehensive campaign to win the battle against proposed legislation to privatize Atlanta’s mass transit system (MARTA).

The coalition, which includes Local 732, Georgians for Better Transit, Stand-Up Georgia, NAACP Georgia, the Georgia Federation of the Blind, and others have urged the state Senate to reject House-passed HB 264, which would outsource many of MARTA’s operations. The coalition has held successful rallies, leafleted MARTA riders; garnered the support of state politicians, clergy and community leaders; and gathered more than 5,600 signatures opposing the legislation.

Transit is a civil right

The coalition has argued that this is a civil rights issue and that the bill would go a long way toward turning the clock back to the Jim Crow era – except instead of forcing African Americans to the back of the bus it would take the bus away altogether for many of Atlanta’s working poor.

“This legislation racially discriminates against Atlanta’s working poor who rely on MARTA to get to their jobs, school, and daily tasks” said Local President Curtis Howard. “It would cut service, defer maintenance, raise fares and force many of MARTA’s mostly African-American workforce out of good paying jobs. We are fighting this bill tooth and nail.”

Control

The legislation would give Republicans and white communities more control over MARTA, a system with 75-percent African-American ridership. Also the state currently provides no funding for MARTA.

The privatization bill was based on recommendations by the auditing giant KPMG. Expert privatization economist Dr. Eliot Sclar issued a scathing report calling the KMPG report “slanted, incomplete, and based on faulty data.” The report, Faulty Data, Wrong Conclusions, shows how false comparisons, illegitimate cost measures, imperfect data, and shortsighted observations were used to arrive at the conclusion that Atlanta should privatize.

‘Highly irresponsible’

“The report’s omissions are glaring. It would be highly irresponsible for any public policy to be crafted based on this slanted, incomplete and predetermined report,” says Sclar. “This has one obvious purpose: to provide a rationale for outsourcing regardless of the evidence, but in reality the report shows MARTA is one of the more efficiently run transit operations in the U.S.”

The coalition’s efforts and campaign are paying off as all signs point to the state Senate rejecting the legislation despite the state House Republicans putting their full weight behind the bill.
Tour bus accidents highlight sweatshops on wheels

You can put these in your “Here we go again” file.

A ski bus accident in California that killed eight and injured 30, a bus crash carrying the Seton Hill College lacrosse team that took the lives of the team’s pregnant coach, her unborn baby and the driver, and a Boston bus accident that injured dozens are the latest in a continuing string of intercity bus accidents. While the Department of Transportation has launched a new crackdown on unscrupulous bus operators, until federal law is amended to require these companies to pay their bus drivers overtime these accidents on the road will continue.

The National Transportation Safety Board estimates that 36 percent of U.S. motorcoach crash fatalities over the past decade have been due to driver fatigue. It is the number one cause of fatal accidents, far above road conditions (2 percent) or inattention (6 percent).

“How many more people need to die in bus crashes before we deal with the real problem behind these accidents?” says International President Larry Hanley. “The drivers are not innocent, but they have become the scapegoats for accidents caused by these sweatshops on wheels. Until overtime regulations are enacted and enforced we will continue to see carnage on the highways.”

The ATU will continue to push for change and supports the Driver Fatigue Prevention Act (S. 487) recently introduced by New York Senator Chuck Schumer. Also newly appointed International Vice President Bruce Hamilton, a strong advocate for changes in the industry, has been named a member of the Motor Carrier Safety Committee (MCSAC) of the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA). MCSAC is charged with providing information, advice and recommendations to FMCSA on safety programs and regulations for large trucks and commercial buses.

DC Metro operators avert suicides

New York’s MTA considers laser technology to prevent track deaths

Local 689—Washington, DC members deserve a medal for saving the lives of three persons attempting to commit suicide on Metro tracks within one week. In all three instances, the operators managed to stop their trains before running over the two men and one woman who were attempting to end their lives.

Suicide attempts, accidental falls onto subway tracks, and riders being deliberately pushed into oncoming trains are plaguing rail operators and transit systems across North America. The accidents not only have impact on service, but can also take a serious physical and psychological toll on drivers and riders alike.

Agencies are investigating ways to deal with this disturbing problem in the wake of several recent deaths on subway tracks. In New York City there were 141 recorded incidents in which a train struck a person last year, 54 were caused by tripping and falling, 33 happened after people intentionally entered the tracks to retrieve lost items, trespass or cross the tracks, and another were 33 caused by people jumping in a suicide attempt. Five of the incidents were the result of someone being pushed or bumped onto the tracks, and about a quarter involved drugs or alcohol.

New York’s MTA is investigating the use of laser “intrusion technology” that would sound an alert when someone is detected on the subway tracks. Such a system might also protect maintenance workers who have at times been killed while doing their jobs on subway light rail tracks.
International President Larry Hanley has appointed Local 1700 President Bruce Hamilton and International Representative Claudia Hudson as international vice presidents (IVPs).

“Bruce and Claudia bring a wealth of experience, commitment, leadership and service to their new posts at ATU,” says Hanley. “They are strong additions to our General Executive Board (GEB) and we look forward to both of them serving as international vice presidents.”

Bruce Hamilton

Since 2005, Hamilton has served as president of Local 1700, which represents Greyhound and other over-the-road (OTR) bus workers. As president of ATU’s only national local union, he has worked all across America, negotiating contracts and organizing terminal workers.

Hamilton joined ATU in 1971, as a Greyhound driver in Des Moines, IA, and has been a union activist for three decades. He has played a key role in all of the big intercity transit battles, from deregulation of the industry, to the 1983 Greyhound strike, to the struggle to preserve terminal workers’ jobs, to the horrific Greyhound strike of 1990 – 1993.

He most recently led the latest negotiations that produced a contract for Greyhound drivers and mechanics that returned wage rules that have not been in the contract for years.

Hamilton has been working on the extension of the Fair Labor Standards Act to intercity bus workers and his appointment signals a strengthened commitment by the International to that cause. Three times as many passengers and workers were killed in U.S. bus accidents in the last five years than in plane crashes, largely due to working conditions imposed by deregulation. He lives in New York City with his wife Kathryn.

Claudia Hudson

Claudia Hudson joined ATU in September 1979, as a bus operator for Alameda-Contra Costa Transit (AC Transit) in Oakland, CA. Ten years later she was elected shop steward of Local 192-Oakland, CA, and served in that role until being elected local vice president in 1996.

Hudson was elected president of the local in 2009, and left that post after being appointed an international representative in February 2011. She has worked extensively with the ATU Field Mobilization Department in campaigns across the United States.

Her experience includes work on the Chicago trusteeship of Local 241 and campaigns in Michigan, Ohio, and in the South. She has been trained by the Gamaliel Foundation in community organizing and worked extensively on the 2012 ATU passenger organizing and political outreach campaigns.

A 2013 graduate of the Harvard Trade Union Program, she will be the third woman to serve as a member of the GEB, and the Union’s first African American woman since the retirement of IVP Karen Simmons.

A native of Richmond, CA, she is a mother of two with five grandchildren and one great grandchild. 🌈
From a Boston bus driver attacked by a group of young riders to a Chicago operator assaulted on a bathroom break to a Sudbury, ON female driver sucker punched by a rider, attacks on transit workers have unfortunately become part of the job. And despite transit agencies’ increased efforts to protect drivers, the danger still seems as great as ever.

The three incidents above happened in the space of four days, demonstrating just how often and difficult the problem remains.

‘Bus invasion’

In what can only be described as a bus invasion, a mob of 20 teenagers attacked an MBTA driver who was simply doing his job, March 9, in Boston.

The teens flagged down the operator who stopped, thinking there was an emergency. Over a dozen swarmed onto the bus and punched the driver while others tried to pull him through the window from the other side.

Grateful he could brake the bus

The heroic operator, a member of ATU Boston Carmen’s Local 589, was remarkably able to hit the brakes of his bus before anyone else could be hurt or even killed by a 6,000-pound runaway coach. He managed to activate the emergency lights and an alarm to signal that the bus was in trouble, and the teens ran away before Boston and MBTA transit police arrived.

The event might not have taken more than two minutes, but the effect on the driver will last a lifetime. Local 589 President John Lee asserted, “this assault by a reported mob on an isolated Local 589 member simply doing his job illustrates the need for public safety officials and the legislature to act quickly before a transit worker is killed.”

The local and transit police are promoting the passage of a bill that would empower transit police to arrest anyone who assaults public service or health care workers in the performance of their job. Right now, the most they can do is issue summons.

The Boston Globe endorsed the bill, March 12, saying: “as part of a sustained effort to protect drivers, those measures would help not just T employees, but the public that relies on safe transportation.”
Attacked on way to bathroom break

On March 8, a Chicago member was assaulted on her way to a bathroom break. Prosecutors say the operator was punched multiple times after she told a woman to wait to board her bus until she (the driver) returned from the restroom.

The assailant was charged with felony-aggravated battery of a transit employee and ordered held in lieu of $50,000.

‘It’s your lucky day…’

On March 6, a CUPE-represented bus operator was attacked in Sudbury, ON. The driver was operating her bus alone when she picked up a passenger.

“It’s your lucky day, b____,” he yelled. He then punched her in the face at least twice and fled.

The driver completed her run in a “state of shock.” She didn't receive any attention until her supervisor noticed her sitting stunned behind the wheel at the station.

While the bump on her head and her black eye have begun to fade, the emotional toll on both her and her family will take a lot longer to subside. The 39-year-old driver tried to begin driving again, only to give the effort up after suffering what she called a “meltdown” an hour into her run.

Two assaults per day in Toronto

In nearby Toronto, the Transit Commission reports that an average of two assaults occur each day. Things have gotten so bad that TTC has assigned two full-time employees whose sole responsibility is attending court with their workers who have been attacked on the job.

Solutions

Installing security cameras and emergency communication systems on buses are the most common things agencies do to catch transit terrorists.

Cleveland’s RTA has launched an app called iWatchRTA with which passengers will be able to send text, emails, photos, and video to transit police to alert them of suspicious or criminal activity. But none of these options do anything to prevent an attack in the first place.

Only shields, which are being installed in greater numbers, prevent thugs from getting to drivers. But, these awkward, aftermarket products all but eliminate personable interaction with passengers.

Shields, also, don’t protect passengers, which leaves putting an armed guard on every bus just about the only complete answer. Given today’s austerity budgets, that’s unlikely to happen. In fact, Buffalo, NY, is considering getting rid of its transit police force to save money.

Progress in British Columbia

At least one property in Vancouver, BC thinks it has found an answer.

Coast Mountain Bus Company statistics show a 52% reduction in assaults in 2012 from the high in 2006.

The company credits the decline in violence on the installation of on-board cameras and systems that, with a touch of a button, allow dispatch staff to instantly hear what’s going on in a bus. They can then pinpoint the location of the bus with GPS and send supervisors or police.

“It eliminates the need to interact with the operator at all,” says one Coast official.

But that’s not all. Vancouver courts have been giving more severe sentences to those convicted of assaulting an operator; treating them the same as someone who has attacked a police officer.

When will it stop?

What’s clear is something needs to be done now to stop this disturbing increase in attacks on bus drivers. The ATU has been working with the Transport Workers Union to find solutions to deal with this crisis. Until transit agencies and government officials decide to seriously address this problem the vicious assaults on drivers will continue.
ATU-rider campaign leads to night bus service in New Bedford, MA

Residents of New Bedford, MA, will now be able to take the bus at night thanks to the hard work of New Bedford and Fall River transit workers and riders.

Over the last two years Locals 174-Fall River, MA, and 1037-New Bedford, MA, have been working with Bus Riders United, a coalition of riders and transit advocates, to fight for more and improved bus service. Their efforts paid off when the Southeastern Regional Transit Authority (SRTA) announced plans to roll out night service in June.

The BRU’s campaign to engage politicians and the community about the importance of the investment in public transit to New Bedford’s economy played a key role in SRTA’s decision to launch night bus service.

“The BRU has been instrumental in getting SRTA to reinstitute holiday bus service for the last year and a fare restructuring that made the bus system more user friendly, which has lead to increased ridership,” said Local 1037 President Gary Pires. “We will now be waging a campaign to make night service permanent and expand it so people can get to and from work and bring customers to area businesses.”

ATU pressure leads to Pensacola City Council plan to use gas tax for transit

Pensacola transit workers, members of Local 1395, spearheaded a campaign that lead to the City Council voting 8-1 to support a proposal to dedicate all the proceeds of a newly passed 4-cent gas tax toward the Escambia County Area Transit system.

The vote comes after Pensacola Mayor Ashton Hayward had proposed using a portion of the gas tax revenue to sweeten the pot on an incentive package for a Singapore aerospace company that is considering moving its operations to the Pensacola International Airport.

Local 1395 President Mike Lowery lead a petition drive, which yielded more than 1,500 riders signing a petition against the idea.
Fellow ATU Members:

In compliance with the Constitution and General Laws of our Union, I am notifying you that the Fifty-Seventh Convention of our Union will convene at the Hilton San Diego Bayfront, 1 Park Boulevard, San Diego, CA, 92101, on Monday, August 26, 2013, at 9:00 a.m.

Basis of Representation

The basis of representation regulating the election of delegates to the Convention is found in the following sections of the Constitution and General Laws:

Section 6.4 Representation; L.U. The basis of representation to the Convention shall be one (1) delegate for each L.U. [Local Union] having three hundred (300) or fewer members. A L.U. having three hundred and one (301) up to six hundred and fifty (650) members shall be entitled to two (2) delegates. A L.U. having six hundred and fifty-one (651) up to nine hundred and fifty (950) members shall be entitled to three (3) delegates. A L.U. having from nine hundred and fifty-one (951) up to twelve hundred and fifty (1,250) members shall be entitled to four (4) delegates and for each additional four hundred (400) members or fraction thereof, shall be entitled to one (1) additional delegate. In totaling membership only those in good standing for the month of May preceding the Convention are to be counted. In case special Conventions are called, basis for representation shall be the membership in good standing for the month in which the call for the Convention is issued.

NOTE: In accordance with Section 6.4, representation of Local Unions will be based on the membership of the Local in good standing for the month of May preceding the Convention. Accordingly, credentials cannot be forwarded to Locals until the May 2013 monthly membership report has been received at the International Office.

Section 6.5 Representation; J.B.C. The basis for representation to the Convention by a J.B.C. [Joint Bargaining Council], formed for collective bargaining purposes pursuant to Section 24 of [the] Constitution, shall be one (1) delegate, except that a J.B.C. representing more than five thousand (5,000) members shall be entitled to two (2) delegates. A J.B.C. representing more than twelve thousand (12,000) members shall be entitled to three (3) delegates. No member represented by the J.B.C. who is, by virtue of his or her office in the L.U. or otherwise, a delegate from his or her L.U., shall
be eligible to serve as delegate from the J.B.C. Delegates from a J.B.C. shall not have the right to vote in the election of international officers unless elected by secret ballot vote among the membership represented by the J.B.C. The provisions of the Constitution relating to delegates from L.U.s shall also govern delegates from a J.B.C. unless clearly inapplicable.

Section 6.6 Representation; C.C. The C.C. [Canadian Council] shall be entitled to one (1) delegate. No member of a Canadian L.U. participating in the C.C. who is, by virtue of his or her office in the L.U. or otherwise, a delegate from his or her L.U., shall be eligible to serve as delegate from the C.C. The delegate from the C.C. shall not have the right to vote in the election of international officers. The provisions of the Constitution relating to delegates from the L.U.s shall also govern the delegate from the C.C. unless clearly inapplicable.

Delegates

Section 6.7 Delegates. The election of delegates must be held at least six (6) weeks previous to the Convention. A member, to be eligible to run for delegate, must have been a member in continuous good standing of his or her L.U. the two (2) years next preceding the day of the nomination meeting. When a L.U. has not been in existence for the two-year period, the L.U. shall elect its other delegates from among its members.

Except where, pursuant to Section 14.2 of [the] Constitution, a meeting attendance requirement is imposed as a condition of eligibility for such an office, the president-business agent, F.S./B.A., or R.S./B.A. where applicable, shall, by virtue of his or her office, be the first (1st) L.U. convention delegate and the F.S. (president in L.U.s where the president is not B.A.) shall, by virtue of his or her office, be the second (2nd) L.U. convention delegate and the election ballot shall in each instance so state.

Except where, pursuant to Section 14.2 of the Constitution, a meeting attendance requirement is imposed as a condition of eligibility for any such office, a L.U. may provide in local bylaws that local officers and executive board members may be delegates to Conventions of the A.T.U. by virtue of their office unless and except where, pursuant to Section 14.2 of [the] Constitution, a meeting attendance requirement is imposed as a condition of eligibility for such an office.

Section 6.8 Alternates. L.U.s shall provide in their bylaws for the election of alternate delegates to the Convention by secret ballot, provided that nothing herein shall prohibit L.U.s from providing in their bylaws that L.U. officers may serve as alternate delegates by virtue of their office unless and except where, pursuant to Section 14.2 of [the] Constitution, a meeting attendance requirement is imposed as a condition of eligibility for such an office.

Section 6.9 Disqualifications. Members who have voluntarily left the service in which the L.U. or J.B.C. or the I.U. is engaged, shall not be eligible as delegates to a Convention of this Union and no member elected as a delegate who has left the active service for reasons other than retirement upon pension shall be seated or serve as a delegate to a Convention of this Union.

Section 6.15 Excused Absences. The policies, laws and plans for the direction of this Union shall be adopted and put into force from time to time by direction of the regular Conventions of this Union, and it shall be the duty of each and every local of this Union to be represented at these Conventions by one (1) or more delegates. No L.U. shall be excused from being
represented except from distressed conditions, owing to lockouts, strikes or causes of that kind. In such cases the L.U. affected shall apply to the I.P. no later than the tenth (10th) of May in the year in which the Convention is held for permission to be excused from sending delegates to the Convention. The I.P. shall investigate and rule upon such applications. Unless excused by the I.P., all L.U.s shall be represented as this Constitution provides.

Credentials

Section 6.10 Credentials. Each delegate shall establish his or her claim to a seat by credential signed by the president and R.S. [recording secretary] of the L.U. he or she represents, with the seal of said L.U. attached. L.U.s shall send names of the respective delegates and alternates elected to the international office of the A.T.U. at least four (4) weeks prior to the date of the Convention. Credentials shall be given each delegate elected, signed by the president and R.S. and the seal of the L.U. attached thereto.

Section 6.14 Financial Requirements. Delegates shall not be entitled to a seat in the Convention unless all taxes and assessments of their L.U. have been paid in full.

Resolutions

Section 6.16 Resolutions. Resolutions contemplative of amendments to the Constitution and General Laws of the I.U. shall first be approved by the L.U. and bear its official seal and then shall be forwarded to the international office in time to be in the hands of the I.P. not later than the first (1st) of August in the year in which the Convention is held. Such resolutions so received by the I.P. shall be printed and placed in the hands of convention delegates at the opening of the particular Convention at which said resolutions are proposed to be presented. All resolution(s) received by the first (1st) of April in the year in which the Convention is held will be published in the May/June issue of In Transit in the year in which the Convention is held. No resolution contemplative of amending the Constitution and General Laws, except as herein provided, shall be considered by Conventions, except on permission or direction by vote of two-thirds of the delegates present.

Voting

Section 6.11 Voting. Each delegate shall be entitled to one (1) vote, no proxy votes being allowed.

Expenses

Section 6.13 Delegate Expenses. The I.U. shall pay one thousand dollars ($1,000.00) to each L.U, J.B.C., and C.C. towards the mileage and legitimate expenses of a L.U., J.B.C. and C.C.’s first delegate and an additional seven hundred and fifty dollars ($750.00) to a L.U., J.B.C. and C.C. sending two (2) or more delegates. The I.U. shall pay an additional one thousand dollars ($1,000.00) to each L.U. with three hundred (300) or fewer members towards delegate expenses. All other mileage and legitimate expenses for delegates shall be borne by the L.U., J.B.C. and C.C. they represent.

NOTE: Pursuant to Section 6.2 the General Executive Board has enacted to require payment of a registration fee of $175 for each delegate and guest.

Headquarters

The headquarters for the Convention will be the Hilton San Diego Bayfront, 1 Park Boulevard, San Diego, CA, 92101. All requests for hotel reservations must be made by calling ATU directly at 202-537-1645.
The strength and solidarity of NYC school bus drivers, matrons and their supporters on the picket lines along with a letter from all of the serious contenders in New York City’s coming mayoral election lead to Local 1181—New York, NY, ending their four-week strike in late February.

With Mayor Bloomberg leaving office this year and the mayoral candidates “pledging, if elected, to revisit the school bus transportation system and contracts, and take effective action to insure that the important job security, wages and benefits of your members are protected within the bidding process,” it was in the best interest of the members and students to end the strike.

The local looks forward to working with the new mayor and the city to find a solution that ensures the important employee protections for school bus drivers and matrons will remain.

“It had been a long four weeks and I’m proud of the strength, solidarity, and unity our members showed each and every day on the picket lines,” said Local 1181 President Michael Cordiello. “We want to thank all our supporters who helped us through that difficult time. Our bus drivers and matrons were glad to get back to work and do the important job of safely transporting the students, who are like our own children, to and from school each day.”

As predicted, starting on tax day – April 15 – school bus operators are planning to drastically slash wages by 7.5%, eliminate pay during weeklong Christmas and Easter breaks, and require employees to pay more for health care.

This is what the anti-union movement hopes to make happen at every transit property in the U.S.
The Massachusetts legislature is considering a bill requiring transit properties to “provide to any person operating a commercial motor vehicle for the purpose of providing public transit an appropriate rest period” of at least 10 minutes every four hours “to utilize the nearest convenient restroom.”

This legislation makes sense as most bus drivers know. In Mississauga, ON, a driver was suspended five days for taking time to use the bathroom while on duty. A few years ago in Portland, OR, a bus driver was in a hurry to take a restroom break. She was late and left the bus running in forward gear, failing to properly set the parking brake. She reached in the driver’s window to pull a lever to close the doors, and then walked back across the front of the bus to rush to the restroom. When the door closed, the brakes were released after a one-and-a-half-second delay, and she was pinned to a bus stop sign and killed instantly.

Health and Dignity

Despite this, The Boston Herald editorial page decided to trivialize the proposed bill, questioning the real need.

ATU International President Larry Hanley responded in a published letter to the editor calling inadequate bathroom breaks a very serious problem that is not only a matter of a driver’s health and dignity, but also a safety concern.

“Drivers operate schedules designed by computers that allow no time for human needs. They are often penalized if they aren’t on time. Traffic and weather intrude upon the best-laid plans of the computer,” Hanley wrote.

Hanley pointed out there are serious safety concerns when driving and holding your bladder. He cited studies finding it has effects similar as to going 24 hours without sleep or a .05 percent blood alcohol content and can lead to health problems.

“The simple solution: extra time on transit routes or mandatory driver breaks. But that is not a priority for public agency leaders,” Hanley wrote. “In what job would workers not have the right to use the washroom? It’s a basic human right and a public safety risk that could mean life or death.”
Sequestration could impact mass transit

New Starts, Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and Hurricane Sandy relief funding could all face cuts under the “sequestration” federal budget-cutting process in the U.S.

Currently, the Highway Trust Fund, including the mass transit account, is exempt from the sequestration, according to the American Public Transportation Association (APTA). However, the federal General Fund transfers to the Highway Trust Fund, and programs financed through the General Fund — are subject to sequestration cuts.

Across-the-board cuts

The sequestration provision requires across-the-board spending cuts of $1.2 trillion. Final numbers will be subject to the Office of Management and Budget’s report to federal agencies, but according to the Congressional Budget Office, the revised automatic spending cuts for discretionary programs in 2013 will amount to a 5.3 percent cut, according to APTA.

“While Congress continues to grapple with sequestration, it will also need to address the remainder of fiscal-year 2013 appropriations,” APTA states. “The federal government continues to operate under a continuing resolution that largely extended FY2012 funding levels, although the continuing resolution did provide funding consistent with the New MAP-21 authorized program structure.”

Locals ‘Stuff the Bus’ to feed the hungry

From Topeka, KS, to Fairfax, VA, to Williamsport, PA, ATU locals across the country are participating in “Stuff the Bus” programs to feed the hungry. The program simply takes a city bus, parks it outside a grocery store, and asks local residents to fill it up with donated, nonperishable food items.

In Topeka, KS, members of Local 1360 volunteered their time to help resurrect the “Stuff the Bus” program to feed the hungry which the local and Topeka Metro have brought back after an eight-year hiatus.

The program collected food for Project Topeka, a volunteer organization, that delivered the donations to local food banks.

‘Couldn’t be happier’

The project is the brainchild of former Local President Jody Stickles, who said, “I couldn’t be happier to see it back again… I’m like a kid on Christmas morning.”

Stickles thanked Metro General Manager Susan Duffy for her help with the project.

Duffy believes Local 1360 operators are in a unique position to see the needs brought about by hunger in Topeka, because, she says, “They see it every day.”
CUTA report shows why transit must be accessible for all

The Canadian Urban Transit Association (CUTA) has released a new report on the Value Case for Accessible Transit in Canada. The study, highlighting the economic and social benefits of accessible transit in Canada, has been developed with the underlying themes of universal accessibility, inclusion, strong vibrant communities, and health.

“This study provides the first value case account of accessible transit in Canada and is an important first step in continuing to evaluate the benefits of such services in our society,” says Lorna Stewart, director of Edmonton Transit Disabled Adult Transit Services (DATS).

Monetary benefits

This report makes the case that providing accessible transit is supported by a broad spectrum of annual monetary benefits to the national economy. “The most significant benefit identified in the report was on the income that can be generated by increased labour force participation, and its resulting potential to generate millions in GDP output and in additional tax base,” says CUTA President and CEO Michael Roschlau. This economic activity represents an important contributor to the vitality of communities across the country.

With the number of seniors in Canada predicted to more than double from 4.0 million to 9.9 million by 2030, investments in accessible transit will be crucial, particularly when looking at health policy linkages. “It will be important for decision makers across the country to view these linkages as a whole and draw insights from them to ensure proper investments are in place to support age friendly cities and communities,” says Stewart.

New pope well acquainted with mass transit

As the archbishop of Buenos Aires, Pope Francis is well known for taking the bus and subway to work and public events.

Even after he was elected pope, Francis chose to ride the bus with his brother cardinals rather than be driven in a waiting papal limousine.

Buenos Aires has a developed public transportation network with an underground rapid transit system and many city buses. Residents do not need cars to get around.

If the pope comes to America, we can only hope that he will be able to find a bus that will take him where he needs to go.
NOTES FROM THE MEETING OF THE

GENERAL EXECUTIVE BOARD

NATIONAL HARBOR, MD, MARCH 6 – 10, 2012

FIRST SESSION

The meeting convened at 9:00 a.m. on Tuesday, March 6, 2012. Board members present were Rodney Richmond, Larry Kinnear, Javier Perez, Jr., Richard Murphy, Bob Hykaway, Charles Cook, Janis Borchardt, Paul Bowen, Kenneth Kirk, Gary Rauen, Marcellus Barnes, Rafael Rivera, Yvette Salazar, Gary Johnson, Robin West, John Costa, and Charles Watson. International President Lawrence J. Hanley presided. Also in attendance were International Executive Vice President Robert H. Baker, Sr., International Secretary-Treasurer Oscar Owens, ATU General Counsel Robert Molofsky, and Executive Assistant to the International President Lauri Straughan.

International Vice-President William McLean was excused.

OPENING REMARKS OF THE INTERNATIONAL PRESIDENT

International President Hanley reviewed the Board agenda for the week, including scheduled speakers. He then presented a summary of activities over the period and plans for educating and training international and local officers, and members to strengthen local involvement in building community-based and ridership coalitions in support of improved transit service, increased funding, contract campaigns and organizing drivers and anti-privatization initiatives. Particular attention was given to the pending 2012 elections and ATU's intensive planning and training programs to expand local participation in the elections and GOTV efforts. Thereafter, members of the General Executive Board engaged in a wide-ranging discussion on how best to achieve these objectives.

AUDIT COMMITTEE APPOINTED

Appointed to the Audit Committee were International Vice Presidents Bowen, Kirk, and Rauen. International Vice President Bowen was designated as chair.

PRESENTATION ON “US LABOR AGAINST THE WAR” WAS GIVEN BY BOB MULLENKAMP

Co-conveners Brooks Sunkett (CWA) and Bob Muehlenkamp discussed the founding (2003) of U.S. Labor Against the War. Its mission, as amended in 2012, is to be “the organized voice within the labor movement for peace and priorities, better to secure human needs and to demilitarize U.S. foreign policy.” In the face of rising deficits, and urgent needs for increased expenditures at home, the ULSAW today is continuing its activities to better direct its nation's resources towards unmet domestic needs.

The international executive officers and members of the Board expanded on the previous discussion of U.S. Labor Against the War.

MOTION APPROVED TO JOIN ‘U.S. LABOR AGAINST THE WAR’ AND MAKE A ONE-TIME CONTRIBUTION OF $5,000.00

Upon motion duly made and seconded, the members of the General Executive Board approved joining the USLAW and making a one-time contribution of $5,000.00, in support of its ongoing campaigns.

LOCAL UNION ADMINISTRATION

The international executive officers and members of the Board discussed financial reports, the misappropriations of union funds, and lost time at local unions.

REPORT OF THE INTERNATIONAL SECRETARY-TREASURER – APPROVED

Upon motion duly made and seconded, the General Executive Board approved the Report of the International Secretary-Treasurer, for the period July 1, 2011 – December 31, 2011.

REPORT OF THE INTERNATIONAL SECRETARY-TREASURER ON ATU MS RESEARCH

The twenty-sixth annual golf tournament, jointly sponsored by the ATU MS Research Funds of the United States and Canada, was held on Monday, September 26, 2011, at Musket Ridge Golf Club in Myersville, Maryland, preceded by the “practice round” on Sunday, November 25. The results of this period's efforts are as follows:

The U.S. fund had as of July 1, 2011, available cash of $4,504.82. The collections during the six-month period ended December 31, 2011, amounted to $76,239.51. These receipts were as follows: General Contributions $2,594.51, Local Union Contributions $12,859.00, Golf Tournament Receipts of $58,736.00, and Booster Contributions of $2,050.00.

During the same six-month period, the fund incurred miscellaneous administrative expenses of $913.62. As a result, the fund had
Special Recognition

Special recognition must again go to the officers and members of Local Union 113 of Toronto, Ontario. Their generous donation of $30,000 will go a long way in the fight against MS. Special mention is also due to the officers and members of the Boston Carmens Local Union 589, the New Jersey Council, and Local Union 1181 of New York, NY, for their sizeable contributions.

Upon motion duly made and seconded, the Report of the International Secretary-Treasurer on ATU-MS Research was approved by the General Executive Board.

CONTRIBUTIONS FROM THE INTERNATIONAL SECRETARY-TREASURER’S ACCOUNT – APPROVED

Upon motion duly made and seconded, the General Executive Board approved the contributions from the Secretary-Treasurer’s account for the period of July 1, 2011 – December 31, 2011. Additional information on “Labor’s Campaign for Single Payer (LCS-P) was requested for review.

GENERAL DISCUSSIONS

The meeting adjourned at 5:00 p.m. to reconvene at 9:00 a.m. on Wednesday, March 7, 2012.

SECOND SESSION

The meeting convened at 9:00 a.m. on Wednesday, March 7, 2012. General Executive Board members present were Rodney Richmond, Larry Kinnear, Javier Perez, Jr., Richard Murphy, Bob Hykaway, Charles Cook, Janis Borchardt, Paul Bowen, Kenneth Kirk, Gary Rauen, Marcellus Barnes, Rafael Rivera, Yvette Salazar, Gary Johnson, Robin West, John Costa, and Charles Watson. International President Lawrence J. Hanley presided. Also in attendance were International Vice President William McLean, International Secretary-Treasurer Oscar Owens, ATU General Counsel Robert Molofsky, and Executive Assistant to the International President Lauri Straughan. In addition, ATU Counsel Dan Smith was present.

International Vice-President William McLean was excused.

APPEALS TO THE GENERAL EXECUTIVE BOARD

APPEAL NO. 1
Pamela Diederich
Local Union 1737 (Douglas County, CO)

There came before the General Executive Board, an appeal by Pamela Diederich, a member of Local 1737 (Douglas County, CO), which contested the May 22, 2011, decision of International President Hanley. Therein, President Hanley denied Sister Diederich’s appeal regarding her challenge to her termination case.

Sister Diederich presented her case by conference call via speakerphone, before the General Executive Board and provided a full explanation of her concerns involving the appeal.

Upon a thorough explanation of all the facts and issues raised, the General Executive Board voted to uphold the decision of International President Hanley.

APPEAL NO. 2
Phillip Williams
Local Union 1181 (New York, NY)

There came before the General Executive Board, an appeal by Phillip Williams, a member of Local 1181 (New York, NY), which contested the October 27, 2011, decision of International President Hanley. Therein, President Hanley denied Brother Williams’ appeal regarding his challenge to his termination case.

Brother Williams made a personal appearance before the General Executive Board and provided a detailed summary of the issues, facts and circumstances underlying his appeal.

Upon a thorough deliberation of all the facts and evidence in this case, the General Executive Board voted to uphold the decision of International President Hanley.

MINUTES OF FALL 2011 GENERAL EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING APPROVED

Upon motion duly made and seconded, the Minutes of the previous General Executive Board Meeting held October 17 - 21, 2011, were approved as submitted.

REPORT ON LOCAL 1593 (Tampa, FL) TRUSTEESHIP

International Vice President Rivera reported on the ongoing process to address the serious financial and administrative issues underlining the trusteeship of Local 1593. Rivera reviewed with the Board the status of pending efforts to address the local’s administrative, financial and legal issues and scheduled elections. He updated the Board on the potential to settle the bankruptcy litigation subject to further consideration by the Board.

REPORT ON LOCAL 241 (Chicago, IL) TRUSTEESHIP

International Vice Presidents Perez and Barnes presented a detailed summary of their ongoing efforts to address the significant financial, administrative, and organizational issues underlining the trusteeship. They reviewed their progress to date, and discussed ongoing preparations and meetings to negotiate a new collective bargaining agreement.
REPORT ON LOCAL 1385 (DAYTON, OH) TRUSTEESHIP
International Vice Presidents Richmond and Johnson presented a comprehensive report on the progress to address all outstanding issues in the trusteeship of Local 1385.

INTERNATIONAL PRESIDENT’S REPORT - ADOPTED
Upon motion duly made and seconded, the Report of the International President for the six-month period ending December 31, 2011, was approved with edits to page 21, striking the reference to First Transit, under listing for Local 1336; and amending reference to Local 1229 (St. John, NB) on page 22 to reflect that it was a lockout.

MOTION APPROVED TO TERMINATE LOCAL 1385 (DAYTON, OH) FROM TRUSTEESHIP EFFECTIVE MAY 1, 2012
Upon motion duly made and seconded, the General Executive Board voted to terminate the trusteeship of Local 1385 effective May 1, 2012.

REPORT ON LOCAL 878 (EVANSVILLE, IN) TRUSTEESHIP
International Vice President Bowen presented a detailed summary of the issues underlying the trusteeship and progress achieved to date.

MOTION APPROVED TO TERMINATE TRUSTEESHIP OF LOCAL 878 (EVANSVILLE, IN)
Upon motion duly made and seconded, the General Executive Board voted to terminate the trusteeship of Local 878 immediately following completion of pending reports and other filings.

REPORT ON CONTRACT CAMPAIGNS AND STRIKE PREPARATION PROCESS - SUMMARY MEMO AND QUESTIONNAIRE TO BE SENT TO ALL ATU LOCALS
International President Hanley presented and the General Executive Board discussed enhanced procedures and planning efforts to assist locals in difficult contract campaigns, potential strike situations and compliance with the requirement set forth under Section 20.

Strike and Lockout Procedures from the ATU Constitution and General Laws
A memo outlining the procedures to be followed by local unions in such situations was reviewed for distribution to all ATU locals. The “ATU Strike Preparation Questionnaire” to assist locals focused on the required notifications to the International and appropriate agencies, a “power analysis” of the bargaining situation, member mobilization assessment and plans, community allies, messaging and public communications and potential for a successful strike. It was agreed that an edited version of the memo and questionnaire should be sent to all ATU locals.

REQUESTS FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE LOCAL 1374 (CALGARY, AB)
Gary Galbreath, president/business agent of Local 1374, requested financial assistance in the form of six (6) months waiver of per capita tax, due to financial costs associated with the local’s five (5) pending arbitration cases.

The financial statement of Local 1374, for the period ended June 2011, listed a beginning balance of $124,896.00. Receipts for the period amounted to $403,908.00 and disbursements were $460,088.00, leaving a balance at the end of the period of $68,716.00. Currently, Local 1374 has 1,302 active members.

The General Executive Board, after careful review and consideration of the facts, voted to authorize providing financial assistance to Local 1374, in the form of a grant of three (3) month’s waiver of per capita tax.

LOCAL 1625 (BUFFALO, NY)
Ronald Andrzejewski, president/business agent of Local 1625, requested financial assistance in the form of three (3) months’ waiver of per capita tax, due to the local’s past due bills and back taxes owed to the Internal Revenue Service.

The financial statement of Local 1625, for the period ended June 2011, listed a beginning balance of $1,318.78. Receipts for the period amounted to $51,337.66 and disbursements were $63,291.93, leaving a balance at the end of the period of $<10,635.49>. Currently, Local 1625 has 342 active members.

The General Executive Board, after careful review and consideration of the facts, voted to authorize providing financial assistance to Local 1625, in the form of a grant of three (3) month’s waiver of per capita tax.

LOCAL 1637, (LAS VEGAS, NV)
Jeffrey Raske, financial secretary of Local 1637, requested financial assistance due to exorbitant legal expenses incurred by the local. He also states the local has outstanding legal bills for arbitrators in the amount of $1,875.00 and legal counsel in the amount of $17,222.18.

The financial statement of Local 1637 for the period ended June 2011, listed a beginning balance of $33,128.79. Receipts for the period amounted to $198,754.11 and disbursements were $196,563.42, leaving a balance at the end of the period of $35,319.48. Currently, Local 1637 has 531 active members.

The General Executive Board, after careful review and consideration of the facts, voted to deny providing financial assistance to Local 1637.

GENERAL DISCUSSION
The remainder of the session was devoted to discussions among the international executive officers and members of the Board.

The meeting adjourned at 5:00 p.m. to reconvene at 9:00 am on Thursday, March 8, 2012.
THIRD SESSION

The meeting convened at 9:00 a.m. on Wednesday, March 8, 2012. General Executive Board members present were Rodney Richmond, Larry Kinnear, Javier Perez, Jr., Richard Murphy, Bob Hykaway, Charles Cook, Janis Borchardt, Paul Bowen, Kenneth Kirk, Gary Rauen, Marcellus Barnes, Rafael Rivera, Yvette Salazar, Gary Johnson, Robin West, John Costa, and Charles Watson. International President Lawrence J. Hanley presided. Also in attendance were International Executive Vice President Robert H. Baker, Sr., International Secretary-Treasurer Oscar Owens, ATU General Counsel Robert Molofsky, and Executive Assistant to the International President Lauri Straughan.

International Vice-President William McLean was excused.

GENERAL DISCUSSION

The international executive officers and members of the Board engaged in discussions regarding “Occupy Boston, the National Day of Action on Transit”, on April 4, 2012.

MOTION TO CONTINUE TO SUPPORT THE OCCUPY WALL STREET MOVEMENT AND ITS CALL FOR AN APRIL ‘DAY OF ACTION’

Following a full discussion of the Occupy Movement’s activities to date, support for transit and other objectives, upon motion duly made and seconded, the members of the General Executive Board voted to support “Occupy’s continuing activities, its “call for action” scheduled for April 2012, and to encourage ATU to join in their campaigns.

REPORT OF THE INTERNATIONAL SECRETARY-TREASURER ON ATU-COPE APPROVED

Upon motion duly made and seconded the members of the General Executive Board approved the following Report on ATU-COPE.

ATU-COPE

(Financial)

The Amalgamated Transit Union Committee on Political Education (ATU-COPE) program collects voluntary contributions from ATU members for the purposes of making contributions to and expenditures for candidates for federal, state and local offices and addressing federal, state and local political issues.

ATU-COPE consists primarily of the Voluntary Account, which is used to make contributions to candidates for federal elections (i.e., U.S. Senate, U.S. House and U.S. President), and to state and local candidates in jurisdictions, which strictly regulate political contributions. In addition to the Voluntary Account, ATU-COPE maintains the Special Holding Account for contributions to state and local candidates and also maintains separate accounts in Florida, Missouri, New York and Wisconsin, as required by those states’ laws.

A complete financial report has been provided in a separate report.

Between January 1, 2011, and December 31, 2011, ATU-COPE took in contributions totaling $981,112.63. As of December 31, 2011, the funds had a combined available balance of $613,153.45.

INTERNATIONAL EXECUTIVE VICE-PRESIDENT’S REPORT ON ORGANIZING – APPROVED

Upon motion duly made and seconded, the members of the General Executive Board approved the International Executive Vice President’s Report on Organizing.

Efforts to organize workers in the transportation-related industry and other areas, as designated by the General Executive Board pursuant to Section 1 of the International Constitution and General Laws, continued over the course of these six months.

Decertification Petitions/Raids During the Period

Local 241 (Chicago, IL) – A group of former Local 241 officers, who had been displaced by the trusteeship, gathered petitions to decertify Local 241 and recertify as Teamsters. The IBT honored our no raid agreement and the petitions were never filed.

Local 381 (Butte, MT) – A petition was filed with the NLRB to decertify the local union as the bargaining representative for some 60 employees of First Student Inc., servicing the Bozeman School District, charges subsequently filed by the local with the NLRB were dismissed. However, shortly after the close of the reporting period the union prevailed in the decertification election.

Local 1309 (San Diego, CA) – A petition was filed with the NLRB to decertify the local union as the bargaining representative of the 115 employees of Veolia Transportation Inc., at the El Cajon property. The IBT intervened and attempted to raid the property. Concentrated efforts were made to ensure that ATU continues as the bargaining representative. As a result, the IBT withdrew their petition and shortly thereafter, the petition filed for decertification was also withdrawn. To date, no further action to raid or decertify the local has been reported.

Strikes

Local 113 (Toronto, ON) - At 12:00 a.m. on Monday, October 24, 2011, members of Local 113 employed by Veolia Transportation, Inc. (York Region Transit-Viva Bus) went on strike when an agreement could not be reached in contract negotiations. The strike was still in effect at the close of this period.

Local 1587 (Toronto, ON) – At 12:00 a.m. on Monday, October 24, 2011, members of Local 1587 employed by First Student Canada and Miller Transit (York Region Transit) went on strike when an agreement could not be reached in contract negotiations. The strike was still in effect at the close of this period.

Local 1229 (Saint John, NB) – the members of Local 1229, who are employed by Acadian Coach Lines, went on strike Friday, December 2, 2011, when an agreement could not be
reached in contract negotiations. The strike was still in effect at the close of this period.

**Expenses**

Approximately $253,137.00 was spent during this report period on organizing. This figure includes the salaries and expenses for the Organizing Department and lost time and miscellaneous expenses for the member organizers. It also includes full-time international representatives’ salaries and expenses for those who assisted in these organizing campaigns. The International reimbursed the local union members assigned to assist these drives for their wages and expenses incurred.

**REPORT ON AMERICANS FOR TRANSIT**

International President Hanley introduced Greg Leroy, executive director of Good Jobs First, to discuss the formation, mission, structure and financing of the newly formed nonprofit “Americans for Transit, Good Jobs First,” a nationally recognized resource center promoting accountability in economic development and smart growth for working families.

Americans for Transit’s mission is to strengthen, create, and unite grassroots transit rider organizations across the United States. It aims to create a big-tent coalition of transit riders and advocates addressing the pressing transit funding crisis in America.

Leroy advised that Andrew Austin is the executive director of Americans for Transit. He previously served as the field director at Transportation Choices, in Washington State, where he led numerous transit ballot measures and rider organizing campaigns.

President Hanley discussed how the new organization would be an invaluable resource to assist ATU locals and communities in establishing effective coalitions to advance a pro-transit/pro-labor agenda.

**MOTION WAS APPROVED TO CONTRIBUTE TO AMERICANS FOR TRANSIT**

Upon motion duly made and seconded, the members of the General Executive Board voted to approve a $100,000 contribution to Americans for Transit.

**MOTION TO CLARIFY THAT THE INTERNATIONAL’S ‘NO CARRY-OVER VACATION POLICY’ APPLIES TO INTERNATIONAL VICE PRESIDENTS**

Upon motion duly made and seconded, the members of the General Executive Board approved a motion clarifying that the International’s “no-vacation carryover policy”, applies to international executive officers and international vice presidents. Under this policy, any unused annual vacation days are forfeited if not used by the end of the calendar year.

**REPORT ON THE AFFORDABLE CARE ACT**

AFSCME health policy experts, Sally Tyler and Mary Meeker presented a comprehensive summary of the Act, its requirements and applicability to both existing collective bargaining agreements and future negotiations. Thereafter, the members of the General Executive Board engaged in a wide-ranging discussion about the impact of the new law on existing health care plans, costs and negotiations.

**DISCUSSION ON ATU STRUCTURAL EXPLORATION COMMITTEE**

International President Hanley and the members of the General Executive Board, discussed various approaches to implement Resolutions A and R, approved by the delegates to the 2010 ATU Convention, calling for the appointment of a special committee to review and develop recommendations for potential changes to the ATU Constitution and General Laws on the ATU dues structure, internal organization, organizing and representation functions and methods of operations. The Board agreed that ongoing efforts to address these matters should continue with ideas and information solicited from a diverse range of local union officers, board members, staff and outside experts.

**AUDIT COMMITTEE’S REPORT ADOPTED**

After discussion, a motion was duly made and seconded, by the members of the General Executive Board to approve the Report of the Audit Committee for the six-month period ended December 31, 2011.

The meeting adjourned at 5:40 pm to reconvene at 9:00 a.m. on Friday, March 9, 2012.

**INTERNATIONAL VICE PRESIDENT RODNEY RICHMOND ANNOUNCED HIS RETIREMENT**

International Vice President Richmond announced his retirement affective July 1, 2012. Richmond, who was first elected to the position at the 1986 ATU Convention, thanked the executive officers and board members for their support and friendship, and for the privilege to represent the members of the ATU. International Vice President Richmond received a standing ovation.

**GENERAL DISCUSSION**

The remainder of the session was devoted to discussions among the international executive officers and members of the Board.

**FOURTH SESSION**

The meeting convened at 9:00 a.m. on Friday, March 9, 2012. General Executive Board members present were Rodney Richmond, Larry Kinnear, Javier Perez, Jr., Richard Murphy, Bob Hykaway, Charles Cook, Janis Borchardt, Paul Bowen, Kenneth Kirk, Gary Rauen, Marcellus Barnes, Rafael Rivera, Yvette Salazar, Gary Johnson, Robin West, John Costa, and Charles Watson. International President Lawrence J. Hanley presided. Also in attendance were International Executive Vice President Robert H. Baker, Sr., International Secretary-Treasurer Oscar Owens, ATU General Counsel Robert Molofsky, and Executive Assistant to the International President Lauri Straughan.
Also in attendance were International Representatives Anthony Withington, Dennis Antonellis, Stephan MacDougall, Claudia Hudson, and Canadian Council Director Stan Dera.

International Vice-President William McLean was excused.

PRESENTATION ON REPORTING AND RECORD KEEPING REQUIREMENTS UNDER LMRDAS

John Lund, assistant secretary, Office of Labor Management Standards, presented a comprehensive PowerPoint and led a discussion among the international executive officers and members of the Board, on both international and local union recordkeeping and reporting requirements under the Labor Management Reporting and Disclosure Act of 1959, as amended. In addition to reviewing obligations for filing LM2 reports and bonding requirements, he discussed the fiduciary standards and responsibilities expected of local union officers and members of the local executive boards. He further reviewed the range of technical assistance, web-based information and training offered by his office to assist unions in complying with the law. He concluded by recommending the distribution of uniform expense, credit card, lost time payment and bylaw provisions, to give guidance to locals to insure proper internal financial and expense controls.

MOTION TO INCLUDE FINANCIAL CONTROLS AND EXPENSE PROVISIONS IN LOCAL UNIONS RELEASED FROM TRUSTEESHIPS

Upon motion duly made and seconded, the members of the General Executive Board approved a motion consistent with authority granted the international president and the GEB, to include financial control, recording keeping and expense policy provisions in amended local union bylaws, prior to releasing local(s) from trusteeship.

MINUTES APPROVED FOR THE SPECIAL TELECONFERENCE MEETING OF THE GENERAL EXECUTIVE BOARD ON FEBRUARY 14, 2012

Upon motion duly made and seconded, the members of the General Executive Board approved the Minutes of the Special Teleconference Meeting of the GEB held on February 14, 2012, to discuss settlement of the pending bankruptcy case involving ATU Local 1593 (Tampa, FL). The minutes of the teleconference meeting also included reference to the approved motion to hold the 2016 Convention in Toronto, Ontario.

PRESENTATION ON JOINT ATU/TWU ASSAULT AND BATHROOM BREAK COMMITTEE

Dave Newman, industrial hygienist, with NYCOSH and Ed Watt, TWU director of safety programs, presented a summary of the recent activities of the Joint ATU/TWU Assault and Bathroom Break Committee. It was formed in response to rising attacks on transit workers and to address inadequate facilities and schedules to allow sufficient time to use appropriate facilities. They reported on its ongoing efforts to conduct comprehensive research among the local unions, develop recommended action plans at the federal, state and local level, and disseminate information on the scope of the problems and the industry’s failure to address these critical health and safety issues. Newman and Watt discussed recent survey results, and pending efforts to meet with officials from OSHA and DOT among others.

GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS DEPARTMENT REPORT

Jeff Rosenberg, director of the ATU’s Department of Government Affairs, reported to the Board on the recent federal and state legislative developments and political activities of the ATU, including the current status and prospects for passage of a new multi-year federal surface transportation bill to reauthorize the Safe, Accountability, Flexible and Efficient Transportation Equity Act. Though it expired in 2009, programs have continued under a series of extensions pending approval of a new bill. He reported on pending efforts in both the Senate and House, and our efforts to guard against onerous privatization provisions, the inclusion of work force development programs, and ATU-led coalition efforts to establish some flexibility for transit agencies to use capital funds for operating assistance under certain conditions, to head off the rising epidemic of service cuts, fare increases and layoffs. In this regard, he discussed ongoing efforts to garner support for the so-called Carnahan Bill, introduced by Representative Carnahan (D-MO,) to address the urgent need for operating assistance.

Rosenberg also reviewed the impact of various anti-labor bills passed in Wisconsin, Ohio, Michigan and other states, and the role the federal 13(c) protections played in mitigating their impact on transit employees. He described the successful effort to defeat legislation in Illinois, to defeat pension legislation adverse to our members employed by the CTA; and continuing efforts in New York to prevent issuance of RPS’s without employee protections that would harm employees represented by ATU Local 1181. Legislative efforts to secure additional state funding in Pennsylvania and ongoing efforts to secure a felony assault bill in Missouri and efforts in Rhode Island to place a union representative on the RIPTA Board were also discussed.

Continuing efforts to address safety and service issues in the over-the-road industry and ATU led efforts to address driver fatigue, which has proven to be a major cause of recent bus accidents were also discussed.

STRIKE SANCTIONS

Upon the request of International Vice President Rauen, the General Executive Board granted strike sanction to the members of Local 610 (Charleston, WV) employed by Veolia.

Upon the request of International Vice President Salazar, the General Executive Board granted strike sanction to the members of Local 381 (Butte, MT) employed by First Student.

Upon the request of International Vice President Rauen, the General Executive Board granted strike sanction to the members of Local 1577 (West Palm Beach, FL) employed by Metro Transit Services.

GENERAL DISCUSSION

Meeting adjourned at 5:00 p.m. to reconvene at 9:00 a.m. Saturday, March 10, 2012.
FIFTH SESSION
The meeting convened at 9:00 a.m. on Saturday, March 10, 2012. General Executive Board members present were Rodney Richmond, Larry Kinnear, Javier Perez, Jr., Richard Murphy, Bob Hykaway, Charles Cook, Janis Borchardt, Paul Bowen, Kenneth Kirk, Gary Rauen, Marcellus Barnes, Rafael Rivera, Yvette Salazar, Gary Johnson, Robin West, John Costa, and Charles Watson. International President Lawrence J. Hanley presided. Also in attendance were International Executive Vice President Robert H. Baker, Sr., International Secretary-Treasurer Oscar Owens, ATU General Counsel Robert Molofsky, and Executive Assistant to the International President Lauri Straughan.

Also in attendance were International Representatives Anthony Withington, Dennis Antonellis, Stephan MacDougall, Claudia Hudson, and Canadian Council Director Stan Dera.

International Vice-President William McLean was excused.

REPORT OF THE GENERAL COUNSEL
During the reporting period of July 1, 2011, through December 31, 2011, the Legal Department continued to provide counsel and representation to the International Union and ATU locals in connection with a wide range of issues. We once again devoted considerable resources to the Section 13(c) processing of U.S. transit grants and assisted local and outside counsel in the ongoing administration, interpretation and enforcement of employee protections applied to federal funding assistance to public transportation services. We also handled a number of other litigation matters in which the International or its local unions were involved before the courts and administrative agencies.

Throughout the reporting period, the Legal Department otherwise responded to a multitude of inquiries concerning organizing drives, internal union elections and local officer fiduciary responsibilities, issues implicating the National Labor Relations Act, the Family and Medical Leave Act, the Fair Labor Standards Act, pension and 401(k) retirement plan rights, drug and alcohol testing requirements, and other federal, state and provincial labor law matters.

More specifically, ATU Special Counsel Molofsky reported to the Board on major litigation developments, Section 13(c) case processing of U.S. transit grants and related Section 13(c) matters. The Board was also fully briefed on ongoing efforts to enforce Section 13(c) protections in response to state legislative attacks on transit and other public employee collective bargaining rights, including legislation arising in Florida, Indiana, Massachusetts, Michigan, Ohio, and Wisconsin. The ongoing Section 13(c) negotiations/arbitration to protect Local 1091 (Austin, TX) members’ collective bargaining rights, pension and health care benefits, following an anticipated transfer of employment from Star-Tran to another private contractor was also reviewed.

Notably, the Legal Department processed an impressive total of 477 grant applications involving some 119 ATU local unions and the New Jersey Council during this reporting period. Further, the Board was updated on the status and successful outcomes of ATU Section 13(c) objections filed in response to state legislative attacks undermining public employee bargaining rights in Michigan, Massachusetts and New Jersey. In both Massachusetts and Michigan the U.S. Department of Labor held that the restrictions over bargaining on mandatory subjects of bargaining (wages and benefits in MI health care in MA) would, unless cured, prevent compliance with the affected transit employees protected and thus render the grantees in the state ineligible for federal transit funding. Following the Department’s rulings the parties were able to address the issues raised with supplemental protections in Michigan and amended legislation in Massachusetts. Fortunately in New Jersey, the state attorney general held New Jersey transit exempt from the adverse legislation.

The Board was also briefed on the extensive efforts to protect the members of ATU Local 1091 (Austin, TX) from adverse affects resulting from the contracting of work previously done by their long term employer, Star Tran, a private non-profit corporation formed by the Capital Metropolitan Transportation Authority, to two independent private companies.

This complex matter encompassed objections to the Department of Labor, a 13(c) claims arbitration case, numerous and unfair labor practices charges filed with the NLRB. This matter and the impact of the contracting of the fixed route service to McDonald Transit remained pending at the close of the reporting period. A detailed discussion of this case is included in the International President’s Report to the GEB.

Updates on Section 13(c) litigation managed through retained counsel involving the Greater Cleveland Regional Transit Authority and Local 268, (Cleveland, OH); the Greater Lafayette Public Transportation Corporation and Local 1741 (Lafayette, IN); the Toledo Area Regional Transit Authority and Local 697 (Toledo, OH); Mid-Ohio Valley Transit Authority and Local 1742, (Charleston, WV); City of Sioux Falls and Local 1356, (Sioux Falls, SD); Niagara Frontier Transportation Authority and Local 1342, (Buffalo, NY); Valley Regional Transit and Local 398 (Boise, ID); Utah Transit Authority and Local 382, (Salt Lake City, UT); and the City of Colorado Springs and Local 19 (Colorado Springs, CO) were provided.

Further, the Board reviewed ongoing efforts to insure continuation of longstanding employee protections in new bids contemplated by the NY Department of Education (DOE), notwithstanding the rejection of arguments advanced by ATU Local 1181 (New York, NY) in litigation against the DOE.

Finally, pending unfair labor practices charges filed through retained counsel on behalf of ATU Local 1225, against Acadian Lines in Moncton, NB, were also discussed with the Board.

GENERAL DISCUSSIONS
The meeting adjourned sine die at 3:30 p.m.
ATU Nombrado Como El Sindicato “Más Valioso” ¡¡Gracias A Ustedes!!

Todos conocemos algunas personas que tienen brazos tan largos que se pasan mucho tiempo dándose palmaditas en la espalda. En algunas ocasiones, a nosotros, que somos parte de un movimiento sindical, se nos conoce por alabarnos por nuestros propios logros.

No es algo extraño: como líderes de organizaciones democráticas, si nuestros miembros no saben lo que nosotros hacemos, no nos eligen. Como solía decir el ex gobernador de Nueva York, Mario Cuomo, “en la política, si no tocas tu propia bocina, no hay música”.

Pero es realmente agradable cuando otros lo hacen por ti.

“Sindicato internacional más valioso”

Para mi gran sorpresa, una noche, a finales de diciembre, recibí un email de un amigo felicitándome por el nombramiento del Sindicato Unido del Transporte (ATU, por sus siglas en inglés), nuestro sindicato, como el “Sindicato internacional más valioso de 2012” en el cuadro de honor progresista anual de la revista The Nation (esta revista es el semanario más antiguo publicado sin interrupción en los Estados Unidos desde 1865).

Existen más de 70 sindicatos internacionales en los Estados Unidos, por lo que haber sido seleccionado como el más progresista es un gran y prestigioso honor.

“Una fuerza con la que hay que contar”

Aquí una parte de lo que dijeron acerca del por qué nos destacamos del resto: “Con sus camisetas Occupy Transit y su enfoque agresivamente progresista en la lucha por los servicios locales y regionales, los 190.000 miembros del ATU son una fuerza con la que hay que contar en los debates sobre la justicia económica y social”.

¡Qué maravilloso escuchar algo así sobre nuestro sindicato! Todo gracias a los cientos de funcionarios que trabajan para ATU y nuestros miles de abnegados miembros.

Realmente siento que nos lo merecemos. Nuestros problemas se han multiplicado en los últimos años, pero también lo han hecho nuestros esfuerzos.

En 2012, los líderes sindicales locales organizaron eventos, transportaron pasajeros, salieron a la calle y han trabajado duro en las elecciones nacionales de EE.UU. para reelegir al Presidente Obama, y elegir a muchos candidatos simpatizantes del transporte, como la senadora Elizabeth Warren y la representante Tammy Duckworth.

¡Orgulloso de pertenecer a ATU!

Siempre está liderado por un pequeño grupo de miembros abnegados. Sin embargo, el creciente número de miembros de las bases de ATU que participan es impresionante, no sólo para nosotros, sino para los líderes de opinión de todo Estados Unidos.

Gracias y felicitaciones. Como miembro desde hace más de 34 años, nunca me había sentido tan orgulloso. El futuro de los trabajadores depende de los sindicatos y ATU se encuentra a la vanguardia de la lucha en todas partes.

Ha Llegado La Primavera Y El Verano Está A La Vuelta

Caramba, ¡el tiempo ha pasado volando y este año nos estamos preparando para nuestra 57ª Convención del Sindicato Unido del Transporte!

Estos tres últimos años han sido notables y nos hemos enfrentado a todos los obstáculos imaginables. Nuestra propia existencia ha sido cuestionada; estado por estado, hemos tenido que luchar contra todo, desde la pérdida total de nuestros derechos de negociación colectiva, una legislación devastadora que nos han impuesto los extremistas de derecha (que realmente no tienen contacto con la sociedad) hasta el derecho al trabajo.

En Canadá el partido Wild Rose nos ha impuesto la legislación de servicios esenciales, la desregulación de nuestros miembros conductores y el derecho al trabajo. El 2% más rico del mundo no ha hecho más que culpar a los trabajadores y trabajadoras de todos sus problemas. ¿He dicho problemas? Perdón, quise decir, de impedirles producir más y más a costa de los trabajadores.
Oiga, señor millonario y multimillonario, tal vez debería despertarse antes de que sea demasiado tarde y darse cuenta de cómo ha llegado al lugar donde se encuentra hoy.

¿Dónde estaríamos?

¿Recuerda cuando Mitt Romney afirmó que las corporaciones también son personas? Tal vez podamos ayudarle a interpretar su afirmación un poco mejor. Sin las personas (trabajadores), no habría corporaciones.

¿Dónde estaríamos todos nosotros si mujeres y hombres trabajadores no se unieran y sacrificaran todos los días?

¿Dónde estaríamos si nuestros hijos e hijas no se marchasen a tierras extranjeras para proteger nuestra libertad, y algunas veces haciendo un sacrificio extremo?

¡Despierten, idiotas! Muestren el respeto que las mujeres y hombres trabajadores se merecen, y entonces sí podremos ser grandes otra vez, en toda América del Norte y en todo el mundo.

De una cosa puede estar seguro y es que, mientras tengamos que hacerlo, continuaremos luchando por los derechos y beneficios de nuestros miembros.

Por favor, recuerde que, mientras nos dediquemos a servir, estaremos decididos a tener éxito.

Saludos solidarios,
Bob Baker
Vicepresidente Ejecutivo Internacional

El Mundo Se Está Cansando De La “Legislación Desastrosa”

Desde su publicación en 2007, el libro Shock Doctrine, de la autora canadiense Naomi Klein, les ha abierto los ojos a los lectores acerca de las tácticas utilizadas por los ricos y poderosos para conseguir lo que quieren a costa de los pobres y la clase media en todo el mundo.

En el libro, Klein describe cómo los ricos, que nunca piensan que tienen suficiente, utilizan la conmoción causada por los desastres naturales o artificiales para aprobar leyes autoritarias y presupuestos de austeridad y así lograr una mayor transferencia de riqueza y poder del 99% al 1%.

Conmoción puede ser cualquier hecho que perturbe nuestra percepción de seguridad. Ataques como el del 11 de septiembre, y los desastres económicos, como la Gran Recesión, son pretextos utilizados para realizar cambios drásticos, que se les dice a los ciudadanos que deben hacerse de inmediato para remediar la situación y evitar un catáclismo aún mayor.

Así fue como se utilizó el 11 de septiembre como excusa para socavar las libertades civiles del pueblo estadounidense, y hoy se utiliza la Gran Recesión para aprobar presupuestos de austeridad que recortan las cosas que la gente realmente necesita con el fin de que los impuestos de los ricos se mantengan a un nivel tan bajo que es un delito.

Klein denomina a esto el “capitalismo del desastre”, pero la técnica también se está utilizando para promulgar leyes favorables a los ricos que de otra manera no habrían sido aprobadas, lo que yo denomino “legislación desastrosa”.

Intransigencia

El ejemplo más reciente ha estado presente desde hace un tiempo en el Congreso de los EE.UU. La intransigencia republicana en todo, desde los presupuestos a los nombramientos políticos, parece impulsar a la nación al borde de una catástrofe tras otra.

De esta manera, las clases conservadoras esperan lograr metas legislativas que no podrían alcanzar en circunstancias normales. Ellos han tomado a la nación como rehén ante los techos de endeudamiento, abismos fiscales y recortes automáticos, bloqueando la legislación necesaria hasta que los miembros responsables, que no están dispuestos a someter a sus conciudadanos a las consecuencias de la inacción, se rindan.

El filibustero, la herramienta favorita de los reaccionarios del Senado, asegura que la voluntad de la minoría prevalezca sobre cualquier proyecto de ley que les disguste a 40 senadores. Y el presidente de la Cámara de Representantes no se atreve a permitir que se presente
un proyecto de ley al que se opone el Tea Party, incluso cuando sabe que la mayoría de los miembros de la Cámara están en favor de dicho proyecto.

“Gallina”

El Partido Republicano prefiere jugar un juego temerario de “gallina” en vez de poner a trabajar a la gente de nuevo y lograr que nuestra economía se vuelva a reactivar.

Y estos cobardes lacayos corporativos tienen el descaro de culpar a las personas que ganan demasiado dinero por los males de nuestra nación a pesar de que muchos trabajadores ni siquiera ganan un salario digno.

Sin embargo, los votantes por suerte parece que han comenzado a darse cuenta de esto. Están cansados de las constantes crisis ideadas por los políticos petulantes que se quedan cruzados de brazos hasta que logran lo que ellos y solo ellos quieren.

Los trabajadores quieren un buen trabajo, no limosnas. Ellos quieren sentirse orgullosos de poder mantener a sus familias. Ellos quieren recuperar su dignidad.

Pero aparentemente los miembros del Partido Republicano tienen la sensibilidad de Nerón, quien, según cuenta la historia, “tocaba la lira mientras Roma ardía” y le echó la culpa a los demás.

No se deje engañar. Exija que sus representantes del Congreso tomen en serio el bienestar financiero suyo y el de su familia.

Y si no lo hacen, usted ya sabe que tiene que hacer a la hora de votar.

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Transitweb

Helping ATU Locals Harness the Power of the Internet for FREE

ATU is launching a new service, TransitWeb, to set up a free state-of-the-art website for local unions. This new innovative program includes:

**EASE OF USE** User-friendly rich features, varied design template options, and ease of use for updates and changes.

**FRESH CONTENT** Easily update your website with fresh content, photos and even videos.

**SUPPORT** Free training to learn how to easily update and maintain your website.

**NO COST** TransitWeb is a FREE program for all local unions, the full cost is covered by ATU International.

**FLEXIBILITY** TransitWeb has been developed for ATU local unions. We’ll help you make your website fit your needs.

To get your website up and running today contact: communications@atu.org.
Cost of mass transit pales in comparison to money spent on wars

Most people know that America spends more on defense than it does on transportation, but the following statistics might truly astound you:

In the ten years between 2001 and 2011, the U.S. government spent a total of $89.5 billion in operating and capital expenditures for public transit, and just $75.5 billion for Head Start.

By comparison, the U.S. spent a total of $1.25 trillion – almost 14 times more – on the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan than it did on public transit during that same period.
got union?

paying union dues provides more than a voice on the job

As a union worker I make a median weekly wage of $943.

I’m non-union because I don’t want to pay union dues.

What’s the median weekly wage for a non-union worker?

$742.00.

So you’re paying non-union dues of how much?

$201 a week!