



The ATU is sad to report the passing of our first member from COVID-19, Local **1576**-Lynnwood, WA Shop Steward Scott Ryan. "This devastating and deadly pandemic has now taken the life of one of our own," said ATU International President John Costa. "While we mourn the death of our brother, transit workers should be ranked alongside police, firefighters, health care workers, and other essential public employees, who are continuously asked to risk their lives on the job to help and protect our communities through this pandemic." The ATU continues to call on transit agencies and contractors to deliver needed materials and adopt policy changes to keep frontline workers safe. These include, but are not limited to, distributing gloves and masks, installing protective barriers, and adopting pandemic leave, rear door entry, fare elimination and other measures to support social distancing.

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Questions about COVID-19? Contact the ATU Rank-And-File Hotline or email



Our COVID-19 Command and Response Hotlines for rank-and-file ATU members are an easy way to get info about your Union's response to COVID-19. Any messages will be followed up on by an ATU organizer or representative as soon as possible. For questions about your employer's policies, please contact your Local Business Agent. In addition, more resources about COVID-19 including informational leaflets, workplace safety checklists, tips for prevention, and information from Centers for Disease Control (CDC) can be found online on the

ATU International's [COVID-19 page](#).

ATU applauds passage of CARES Act, \$25 billion in emergency transit funding



For providing a lifeline to public transit workers and riders, the ATU praised Congressional passage of the \$2 trillion *Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act*, with \$25 billion in emergency relief for public transit systems. That is funding that should be used to keep transit workers safe on the job and keep service on the streets for people who rely on transit for essential services. “Since the coronavirus pandemic began, transit workers have put themselves in harm’s way in service to their communities, often with little or no protection from COVID-19,” said ATU International President John Costa. “With this money, agencies should immediately purchase and deliver the critical safety protections our members need to continue to provide strategic transit service for our communities, and they should use it to prevent layoffs at transit agencies that have had to reduce service.”

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ATU members and other union workers are stepping up to beat the coronavirus



As the number of confirmed coronavirus cases continues to grow, workers in frontline industries across the country are mobilizing to save lives. From hospital wards to bus routes to a ventilator plant in Wisconsin, working-class Americans are giving their all, but these workers need protections to ensure their safety. To help do that the ATU has set up a national command center, with hotlines for workers and union representatives, to ensure that union members get the protection they need to keep drivers and other workers safe and healthy.

Members of National Nurses United are keeping hospitals going often without access to proper protective gear. ATU and other unions have campaigns to ensure frontline workers receive the necessary protective equipment to prevent them from contracting the virus themselves. These concerns were also shared by ATU International President John Costa who explained that our members are “essential to [the] battle against COVID-19, trying to get other first responders to the front line, to keep the economy going,” and yet they too are being exposed to possible infection due to inadequate cleaning supplies and protective gear.

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ATU calls for stronger protections for frontline transit workers



We Demand Transit Agencies and Private Contractors Provide



As infections and deaths from the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic mount, transit agencies are failing to protect frontline workers. ATU has received reports from Local officers in more than 30 U.S. states and several Canadian provinces, all telling similar stories: bus operators packed into crowded garages and day rooms, workers who have had close contact with confirmed COVID-19 cases being pushed to continue working, and maintenance departments with inadequate disinfectant regimens. In response, the ATU is demanding employers

move quickly to deliver needed materials and policy changes to keep systems running and workers safe. “It’s time for transit agencies to provide us the protections we need to work safely and for the right to keep ourselves, our families, our riders and

our communities safe while continuing to provide essential transit services needed to fight this crisis,” said ATU International President John Costa.

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As businesses close, bus drivers’ pit stop options en route dwindle



As more businesses close their doors amid the latest wave of coronavirus shutdowns, some bus operators are suffering unintended consequences, as there are now few places left for them to go to the bathroom while on their routes. “Ladies and gentlemen are out there risking their health, driving people to dialysis, hospitals, assessment centres. They’re in the thick of it,” said Andre Fournier, President of Local **741**-London, ON, who represents London Transit workers. Still, Fournier is hopeful local businesses will open their doors to bus

drivers who need to use the bathroom while on their routes. In response, some businesses have already begun to show solidarity. Bilal Mahmood, manager of Osmow’s shawarma, put a sign on their door so operators knew they were welcome to use the facilities. He said the business decided to open for bus drivers when it heard about their troubles. “We are part of the community. No one should be alone.”

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