

ATU Local 836 Response the Rapid Statement:

In response to the Rapid Management Statement please note the following:

Management stated that we: “(The Rapid and ATU) have regular labor/management meetings, as well as regular safety committee meetings, and each of those meetings were held in the last five (5) business days and the ATU did not raise any specific issues related to their safety or mistreatment.”

The spokesperson is being disingenuous at best; during our labor/management meetings we specifically mentioned driver safety because a driver was recently threaten by a passenger, and management responded that the passenger was not charged with assault on our driver but was charged with an current outstanding arrest warrant. In this instance, we (ATU) had requested a copy of the video and we were informed that we would need to request via FOIA, due to the charge not being against the driver.

With respect to the “regular safety committee meetings” that management is referring too; the meeting was an introductory meeting, as well as the first meeting of the Joint Labor/Management Safety Committee, as mandated by The Infrastructure and Investment Jobs Act (IIJA), also known as the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law. The agenda of the meeting was to discuss the scope of future meetings and the safety committee objectives and mission. Also, management refused to compensate ATU Safety Committee Members; therefore, not all ATU members were present at the introductory meeting.

Interurban (The Rapid), is required by law to establish and implement the Labor/Management Safety Committee; therefore, the safety committee business is Interurban (The Rapid) business, and there is no reasonable argument to be had that prohibits Interurban (The Rapid) from paying the union-side safety committee members. Safety committee meetings are required under the IIJA, and those meetings must include frontline workers, bus operators and technicians, and Interurban (The Rapid) is required to pay them.

Just like any other work performed for Interurban (The Rapid) under the Fair Labor Standards Act and under Michigan wage and hour law, fines and other penalties may apply to employers that fail to follow these wage payment laws, and ATU local 836, may file a wage and hour compliant against Interurban (The Rapid) if management does not agree to pay union-side safety committee members.

With respect to the two Unfair Labor Practices lawsuit now before the Michigan Employee Relations Commission, one of which is about the wage increase:

“The Authority recognizes the Union (ATU local 836), as the exclusive bargaining representative in respect to rates of pay, **wages**, hours of employment and other conditions of employment for all employees of the Authority not excluded as supervisory.” **The Authority failed to meet its obligations to bargain over wages to which we demanded in writing.**

The second Unfair Labor Practice lawsuit now before the Michigan Employee Relations Commission is a dispute related to the Union’s on-site bulletin boards.

Again, “The Authority recognize The Accredited officers who shall conduct all business under the provisions of the CBA Agreement, on the part of the Union, shall be the President, Business Agent, Executive Board, or such additional representatives as may be selected and designated under the bylaws of the Union.”

Our Recording Secretary has the duty of updating and maintaining our bulletin boards, there is no provision in our contract that alludes to the characterization of non-employee. Further, ATU Local 836, maintain the right to designate who updates our Union Bulletin Board, not the Rapid, who suggested that we designate someone else to update our Union Bulletin Board.

Therefore, the Rapid denial of any Unfair Labor Practices occurrences in these instances are disingenuous and without merit.

ATU Local 836, will continue to bring further information regarding the safety and mistreatment of drivers, and cancellation of services affecting our passengers to the attention of the public and our community and political leaders.

Thank you.