



ATU LOCAL 1181-1061  
UPDATE TO THE MEMBERSHIP  
May 29, 2020

Dear Brothers and Sisters:

I hope this update finds you all in good health.

I again would like to thank our members at MTA Spring Creek, Maggie's Para Transit, MVP Para Transit, MVT Para Transit and GVC II Para Transit for the good work they are doing during this COVID-19 pandemic. You are truly heroes and we have posted banners on those locations to honor those workers. The entire ATU Local 1181-1061 family is proud of your continued courage during this pandemic.



MTA Bus Spring Creek

The ATU and TWU are jointly working on a campaign to bring hazard pay to all MTA employees. As more information becomes available on this issue, we will report it to you.

Paratransit Update

We will also be introducing contract language for an addendum to the paratransit contracts for your companies to pay hazard pay to all of our paratransit division members.

I have been working with Justin Wood, Director of Organizing and Strategic Research for the New York Lawyers for the Public Interest, along with AARRG (Access-a-Ride Reform Group), on the current bills in Albany pertaining to the access-a-ride program. We are pushing to extend the current e-hail service, in addition to putting into law, PPE protections for COVID-19 in order to keep both passengers and workers safe.



The second bill we are working on is not only an extension of the current e-hail service, but an expansion of the e-hail service. We are asking that it applies to the paratransit companies represented by ATU Local 1181-1061 so that the MTA could develop and provide a similar e-hail service and the work would be done by the experienced, unionized, professional drivers from the paratransit companies that exist today. If this bill were to pass, it would provide security and new jobs for unionized workers in the paratransit division represented by ATU Local 1181-1061.

### MVT Paratransit STRIKE

MVT negotiations have been ongoing since August of 2019. Ed Cusano, Anthony Cordiello and John Deloatch, along with the negotiating committee held a negotiation session on May 7, 2020 in which the company failed to meet the expectations of the committee. As a result, the company gave their "Best and Final Offer" (BAFO) which we took for a vote by the membership on May 14, 2020 at MVT in Brooklyn. The union and its committee did not approve of the contract and asked the members to reject the contract and vote to strike. The results were overwhelming! Out of the 350 employees that work at MVT, 233 members voted NO to the contract and YES to sanction a STRIKE, and 23 voted in favor of the contract. As of Wednesday, 3:00am, May 23, 2020 MVT is on strike.

Executive Board Members, Ed Cusano, Anthony Cordiello and John Deloatch who represent paratransit, went to the MV property to explain the contract and take the vote. Our members are united and need to have a contract which could support their families and provide adequate health benefits. Please give them all your support.





### New York City Department of Education School Bus Industry

As you are aware, on May 1, 2020, the City stopped funding the New York City school bus contractors and in fact took the school bus contract extension vote entirely out of the Panel for Education Policy (PEP) agenda on May 7, 2020. The companies that provide service to New York City (your employers), have not received pay for April although they have paid our members at 85% and full medical and pension.

We are encouraging the City administration to further review that decision so that you, the members, can begin to receive pay and have your medical benefits reinstated. (Attached to this update is testimony which I gave at the City Council hearing on May 21<sup>st</sup>. In addition, also attached, is a letter jointly signed by myself and other unions to US Senators Schumer and Gillibrand asking that in the next stimulus package (Heroes Act) must require school districts, including the City of New York, to pay the companies which in turn would require the companies to pay wages and benefits to you the workers and our members. The ATU International has also sent a letter to US Senators Schumer and Gillibrand.

### All American

At this point in time All American is the only legacy school bus company that has received the PPP small business loan. As a result, those members (196 drivers) are all being paid for the eight-week period of the loan at 100% in addition to their medical and pension benefits.

### Reliant Negotiations

Via Microsoft Teams, myself and your Executive Board has had two negotiations with Reliant. One on May 13, 2020 and one on May 21, 2020. The Executive Board also met with the Reliant committee members on May 14, 2020.

Reliant has told us that they no longer will negotiate terms and conditions for the 2019-2020 school year. After speaking with the committee on the May 14<sup>th</sup>, it was decided by the committee and the Executive Board, to reject Reliant's offer. We insisted that negotiations continue and that they meet the criteria for all the other contractors who are affiliated with our pension and medical funds. As far as we are concerned, they cannot refuse to negotiate or we will make them pay when we go back to work!

Reliant already has told us that they will not pay Easter week and they do not intend to pay wage accruals. Therefore, we have filed an arbitration on Easter week and if they do not pay wage accruals, we will file for an arbitration for wage accruals.

It is also my understanding that Reliant maybe speaking to the City of New York about their future contract. Upon hearing this news, I reached out to the City and spoke to the Commissioner of Labor. We are currently seeking a meeting via Zoom with city officials to ensure that our members are protected.

### 19A Physicals

It has come to my attention that members are being contacted either by their doctor's office or their company when they are due for their 19A physical. We recommend that all members make an attempt to obtain their 19A medical if it is about to expire. Since this physical was



always covered by the medical benefits, if you do not have the money or the benefits to do so at this time, you can wait. According to the DMV Commercial Drivers Licenses will not be downgraded due to 19A until the state of emergency declared by the Governor has ended.

#### School District Contracts

Our school district contract members are continuing to be paid. Those districts are Croton Harmon, Clarkstown, Half Hollow Hills, Elmont, Franklin Square, and Floral Park. Beginning Wednesday, May 26, 2020, Franklin Square employees will report to duty to deliver lunch to the corresponding programs, pick up mail and transport vehicles to and from maintenance. In addition, Royal Coach (who services the Somers School District) are also continuing to be paid.

#### Long Island Private Contractor Bus Companies

Pierce Coach Line has paid our members up until April 30<sup>th</sup>. Subsequently, because the school districts did not pay the company as of May 1<sup>st</sup>, those members were laid off and are now collecting unemployment.

WE Transport - 70% of our WE Transport membership is now collecting unemployment. Some school districts who are paying the company the employees who service those districts are receiving pay.

First Student members are collecting unemployment, except those who had routes in the Jericho School District who are currently being paid because the school district is paying the company.

#### Negotiations

CPT proposals are being put together and negotiations will commence via Zoom shortly as we are seeking dates from the company.

Royal Coach - We are also at Royal Coach putting together our proposals and will commence negotiations soon.

Clarkstown School District - just prior to the New York pause, we had reached an agreement in principle with the Clarkstown School District. The committee and the union are currently reviewing the documents received last week from the district. When the language in the agreement is finalized, we will bring the agreement to the members for a contract ratification vote.

Also, attached to this update is a heartwarming story of good will by some of our members on Staten Island.

Remember your Union is still working for you. The Executive Board meets via Zoom every Monday at 10 o'clock and I meet with the ATU International and all of the Presidents across the United States and Canada every Friday night at 7 o'clock through a town hall meeting.

Those of the Executive Board that also serve on the Board of Trustees for the Pension and Welfare Funds have met three times via Zoom during the lockdown, to ensure that once this crisis has ended, your medical benefits and pension will resume and rest assured it will.

In closing, I would ask all of you who are reading this to take time out of your day for a moment of silence for those of our members who have succumb to this terrible virus. We have lost approximately 20 active members and over 35 retirees.

Together we will overcome adversity! United we become strong!

God bless you and your families!

God bless the ATU Local 1181-1061

In Solidarity,

Michael Cordiello, President/Business Agent  
and the Executive Board  
ATU Local 1181-1061