



Forestville, Md. - July 16, 2018: *In response to the press release sent from Metro, "Metro Statement Regarding ATU Local 689 Strike Authorization," ATU Local 689 issues the following statement:*

For the past two years, ATU Local 689 has come to the WMATA board demonstrating to them the many ways Metro's General Manager Paul Wiedefeld – the man that they hired – has been pissing on the collective bargaining agreement (CBA) between ATU Local 689 and WMATA, and they still don't get it.

The reason the members of our union voted to authorize a strike yesterday is because Wiedefeld refuses to abide by the CBA. Wiedefeld's destructive tactics undermine the CBA and has got us to this point of impasse. It is time for him to take responsibility for his failure to hold up his end of the agreement and stop blaming his workers for the incompetence of him and his team.

Furthermore, the statement Metro issued earlier today is as tone deaf as it is willfully ignorant. Our riders are hurting and inconvenienced because of him. He has plagued riders with month-long shutdowns, raised fares, cut bus and rail service, and shortened operating hours. It is pitiful that he prefers to speak in the abstract than deal with the real issues he has with his workforce that is impacting the riding public.

Wiedefeld would also have the public to believe that he magically secured dedicated funding and our strike authorization is intended to undermine the progress we have made in securing this funding. Nothing could be further from the truth. Our union and the labor community of this region worked tirelessly with our political allies to make dedicated funding happen, too. The worker issues we had with Wiedefeld existed while we were fighting for dedicated funding, but we put them aside for the good of the system while working to achieve a common goal. Now it is time for him to work us.

The D.C. region is growing at a historic rate, but Wiedefeld and his conspirators in Virginia want to slow growth at Metro which is terrible for all parties concerned. Slowing growth means slowing the system, and slowing the system stunts the growth of our region.

Today's statement by Metro is another reminder that Wiedefeld is unfit to do his job. The WMATA board needs to do to Wiedefeld what Larry Hogan did to him when he was at BWI airport and fire him.

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