



Media Contact: David Stephen

Phone: (301) 562-6899

Email: dstephen@atu689.org

RIDER PUNCHES A METRO BUS OPERATOR IN THE FACE, BREAKING HER TOOTH

Alexandria, Virginia ---- April 30, 2018: Last Wednesday, a rider took a Yellow Line train to chase down a bus operator where he proceeded to punch her in the face, breaking her tooth.

The incident happened in the 11 p.m. hour at the Huntington Metro station in Alexandria, Virginia. According to the operator and other witnesses on the bus, the rider became irate because he missed the bus at the Braddock Rd Metro station, so he decided to chase down the operator by riding a train to her next stop and confront her about his frustration.

When the man boarded the bus at Huntington, another rider attempted to intervene before the incident became physical. The other rider was the first person the assailant attacked. The assailant then reached around the bus shield to punch the bus operator.

“Any attack on a Metro employee, whether it is an operator or maintenance that work on vehicles in the field, places everyone on the bus, and even the public around the buses in danger,” said ATU Local 689 Second Vice President Raymond Jackson, whose union represents the assaulted bus operator. “It has been almost a week since this incident and the leadership at Metro has done very little to inform the public that this happened. We find that unacceptable.”

Earlier this month, the Maryland state legislature passed legislation making any physical assault on a transit worker a felony. The union is renewing its call to have Virginia and D.C. do the same.

“A message needs to be sent to reassure the riding public and the transit workers that they can have a safe ride every time they take a bus or train in Maryland, D.C. or Virginia,” said Jackson. “No one should get on a Metro bus and feel unsafe because Metro leadership is doing too little or the penalties are not effective. The bus shield on that bus did not save the operator or the rider that was attacked. We must pass new legislation and get serious about Metro safety, and we must do it now.”