



For Immediate Release

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WMATA Lies About Need to Use Private Contractors for Shutdown Work

(Forestville, MD) June 13th, 2019 – After issuing a statement yesterday on WMATA’s shutdown failures, WMATA responded to WJLA7’s report by claiming that there weren’t enough Metro bus operators to handle the shutdown without bringing in private contractors.

This is a lie. WMATA did not even offer shuttle work to its own employees until after it had already sought private contracts to handle the shutdown. We know this is the case because it was revealed to us accidentally in a private unrelated phone call with management. On the call we were told that they had already contracted out the shutdown shuttle work to DASH.

Former President Jackie Jeter, signed a Memorandum of Understanding with WMATA on June 8th, 2018 for a tenure of 18th months, that offers our part-time bus operator retirees the opportunity to be brought back on for work to specifically address operator shortages and project needs like this one. WMATA has blatantly violated its part of the agreement and never offered the work to these retirees as agreed.

ATU Local 689 has bus retirees that have asked why they were not contacted regarding shutdown driving opportunities. We believe that this is because WMATA is more interested in trying to privatize public transit than it is interested in providing safe and reliable service to its riders.

“If WMATA actually wanted to minimize disruptions to the riding public it would have had WMATA’s own well-trained, skilled, workers and retirees handle the shutdown routes. But WMATA revealed to us that it never intended to offer us that work. It should be common sense to hire the drivers who already know these areas and have operated under WMATA Standard Operating Procedures for years. WMATA should uphold the agreements that they made with us in 2018.” said Raymond Jackson, President and Business Agent of Amalgamated Transit Union, Local 689.

We don’t believe WMATA management has the best interests of the riding public or its workers at heart.

ATU Local 689 calls on WMATA to stop lying to its riders and end its disastrous privatization schemes. As stated in our last release, WMATA seems to be more concerned with adding private contractors to the budget than paying its own workers to do the work.

A member of WMATA management told ATU Local 689 yesterday that this whole shutdown shuttle debacle is a “Nightmare”. Local 689 and WMATA are meeting today to discuss possible resolutions to this matter. Future updates to come.

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Amalgamated Transit Union Local 689 is comprised of more than 13,000 members performing occupations within the many skilled transportation crafts for the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA), MetroAccess, DASH, and the DC Streetcar. A member of the Amalgamated Transit Union (AFL-CIO/CLC), the largest labor organization representing transit workers in the United States and Canada, Local 689 was established on January 19, 1916. For more information please visit our website at atulocal689.org.