



# TRANSPORT WORKERS UNION

## OF GREATER NEW YORK • AFL-CIO • LOCAL 100

**Tony Utano**  
President

**Earl Phillips**  
Secretary Treasurer

**LaTonya Crisp**  
Recording Secretary

**Lynwood Whichard**  
Administrative VP

Testimony by Transport Workers Union Local 100 President Tony Utano to the New York Senate Standing Committee on Corporations, Authorities and Commissions

As President of TWU Local 100, representing approximately 46,000 men and women who operate and maintain the MTA's bus and subway system, I'd like to give you some of our top priorities as you examine the authority's finances and question executives about the authority's plans.

My members have been through a hell of a lot during the COVID-19 pandemic. We lost more than 110 members who worked at MTA NYC Transit. The MTA must have adequate funding to stockpile necessary protective equipment, provide social distancing space in the worksite, and take other safety measures in preparation for any next pandemic.

Assaults against transit workers continue in the bus and subway system. The MTA must have a robust plan to better protect workers from abusive riders. On the bus side, we have urged the authority to adopt a new bus design that will eliminate Bus Operator assaults: the "cockpit" design that moves the front door behind the front wheel so there can be a complete see-through barrier completely separating the passenger area from the Bus Operator. There are buses like this on the streets of some other cities in the United States. This must be a priority for the MTA. On the subway side, the MTA needs to keep bolstering the use of video cameras that not only record but that are monitored in real time by law enforcement to spot developing conflicts and respond.

The riding public demands staffed stations and fully staffed trains, and they are correct in making such a demand. Funding must be provided to maintain two-person train crews. We've seen during the recent flooding and power outages how important it is to have both a Train Operator and Conductor on board. Dozens of trains were stuck in tunnels between stations, including under-water tunnels, requiring evacuations along the dangerous roadbed. Station Agents are the extra



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“eyes and ears” of law enforcement, provide a uniformed presence of authority themselves and provide valuable customer service. That service includes selling fares to riders who use cash – and the MTA should resume cash transactions in subway booths just as they have for customers on the MTA’s commuter railroads.

The recent flooding also highlights the need for additional work to keep water out of stations with anti-flooding measures that in-house transit crews can construct across the system.

Finally, the MTA should identify funding to provide heroic transit workers with hazard pay for their service during the pandemic.

