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## **ATU Local 1056 Urges, MTA, TLC, NYPD to Address Illegal Vans Not Just How Vans Get Licensed At Issue; How Vans Operate Matters!**

Amalgamated Transit Union (ATU) Local 1056 called on the City and State agencies to work together address the scourge of vans that operate illegally and unsafely in many City communities including southeast Queens. ATU 1056 President and Business Agent I. Danee Miller issued the call after some van operators sought an end run around recent state legislation to address the need for street hails neighborhoods lack access to Yellow Taxis. “Whether or not vans get licensed remains a small part of the equation,” explained Mr. Miller who also chairs the MTA Labor Coalition. “Vans licensed and unlicensed illegally and unsafely operate along bus routes and deprive the MTA of revenue that it can re-invest in bus service.” ATU 1056 members – bus operators and mechanics – work for MTA New York City Transit's Queens bus division and serve the riding public.

“In particular, NYPD, the Taxi and Limousine Commission and the MTA really need to coordinate their activities at such transit bus hubs as Parsons Archer and 179<sup>th</sup> Street Hillside,” added Miller. Just as the MTA and NYPD have focused on farebeating by some who ride our buses, these three agencies need to address the outright theft of fares by these vans.

“So-called commuter vans, unreliable, often unsafe and many more times than not operating illegally, offer straphangers a dangerous alternative to MTA bus service,” Miller said. “The woefully inadequate response to illegal, unregulated and unsafe vans allows these unsafe vans to ply bus routes, pick up passengers at bus stops and the subways, deprive the Authority of revenue and reduce passenger counts that the Authority uses to cut service. Their operation *de facto* recreates the two-fare zones we fought to eliminate.”

“Unlike the drivers such as 1056 members who operate MTA buses in Queens, these van drivers do not get training, do not find themselves subject to drug testing while they race along city streets putting all at risk. If a vans has an operating license but operates along a bus route and picks up and discharges passengers at bus stops, it operates ILLEGALLY. Few vans follow ANY rules. The Authority must work with NYPD and TLC, and not just intermittently, to address this safety issue.”

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Queens Division, Who safely Operate and  
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Manhattan, and the Bronx since January  
23rd, 1935.*

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