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May 5, 2015

Board of Commissioners
Rochester Genesee Regional Transportation Authority
1372 East Main Street
Rochester, NY 14609

The NYS Legislative Conference of Amalgamated Transit Unions respectively urges the Rochester Genesee Regional Transportation Authority (RGRTA) Board of Commissioners to overrule the misguided decision of Rochester Transit System CEO Bill Carpenter to cancel its contract with the Rochester City School District (RCSD) affecting some 9,000 students. I lead of coalition of public transit locals (ATUs 282, 580, 582, 726, 923, 1056, 1145, 1179, 1181, 1321, 1342, 1592 and 1625) that represent public transit workers servicing communities across New York State.

The “Bill Carpenter” scheme (April 28, 2015), introduces service cuts rather than helping the community to address the increase of students at the transit center. The scheme further insults not only the riding public but the school board that enter in to a contract to address the very same concerns that Bill Carpenter is shamelessly trying to avoid. The result only harms the riding public and their ability to move about their community to work, shop, worship or or attend school. Customers will face a significant decrease in service, and experience overcrowding and difficulty finding a seat or standing room on their regular line buses.

As a quick overview, in a ruse to save cash, the ‘Bill Carpenter’ scheme fails on the strength of the proposal alone. The scheme increases overall costs for taxpayers in burdening other social services. Concerns raised about security and safety at the Transit Center need to be addressed. A better and sensible solutions exists and the safety of the system and its efficiently can be improved here. We have demonstrated this fact over the entire State of New York. It simply involves re-instituting the safe and efficient assignment of all city school students to Express Transfer Service Buses. This prevents reliance on a costly private bus service option or burdening a bus system regular line service with 9000 students.

Our experience with transit systems across the state demonstrates that a disinvestment in bus service creates an elimination of bus operators (here 106) and maintenance personnel (40 in this case) qnd guarantees an inability to meet service requirements. ATU Local 282 reminds this board that if this proposal is not rejected, it can reverse the economic growth of our region and its future development as an area of interest.

Moreover, the RGRTA, by failing to hold required public hearings, faces a potential Federal Civil Rights Act (Title VI) violation for cutting service unlawfully and discriminatory. Furthermore, RGRTA should be reminded that the unsound decisions made by Bill Carpenter extend beyond this recent scheme. He has demonstrated a lack of foresight and succession planning need to operate the RTS effectively. The RTS needs new leadership which can restore the longstanding and reliable relationship

with the riding public, and begin to deliver a service that keeps up with economic demands that Rochester should be enjoying. The citizens of Rochester deserve better.

Thank you for your attention in this important matter.

I look forward to your reply.

Sincerely,

Mark A. Henry
Chair, ATU NYS Legislative Conference Board