

**Statement of Jose DeJesus, Amalgamated Transit Union (ATU) President/Business Agent, ATU Local 1179
to NYC Council Committee on Transportation Hearing on the Establishment of a
Crash Investigation and Analysis Unit within the DOT, February 24, 2021**

Thank you, Chairman Rodriguez, for this opportunity to present on behalf of Amalgamated Transit Union (ATU) Local 1179. I am Jose DeJesus, President/Business Agent of the local.

The members of ATU Local 1179 in Queens, Local 726 in Staten Island, Local 1056 also in Queens and Local 1181 in Brooklyn serve the riding public. Local 1179 members operate and maintain MTA Bus routes serving Queens with some routes extending into Brooklyn and Manhattan. ATU members are working under an expired contract that the MTA **REFUSES** to update. The MTA already settled a new contract including new wages for the workers represented by TWU Local 100; this creates two classes of workers paid differently to perform the same work.

In this context, we offer our concerns on Int. No. 2224 which ATU understands got first introduced earlier this month. It calls for intending to establish a crash investigation and analysis unit within the NYC Department of Transportation. The NYPD currently investigates serious vehicular crashes and clearly has special expertise in this regard. Creating a new unit in another agency without established investigatory expertise does not make sense and may allow for the injection of ideology where dispassionate analysis and investigation remains important.

ATU members and bus operators for TWU Local 100 already face concerns of arrest under the implementation of the Vision Zero law; we were promised it would not cover bus drivers but those understandings were not followed. ATU certainly supports analysis and investigation of vehicle accidents involving significant injuries; we emphasize safety and are proud of our bus operators. ATU certainly would welcome a process that regularly recommends safety-improvements to street design and infrastructure, and posting such reports on the Internet.

Our concern remains establishment of a new unit lacking the investigatory expertise. ATU calls for discussions on the implications of this legislation before further consideration is forum such as these.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify. I am happy to serve as a resource and offer advice and guidance on this and other issues as we move forward.

#



*Amalgamated Transit Union Local 1179
214-53 Jamaica Ave.
Queens Village, N.Y., 11428
(718) 736-1179 * www.atu1179.com*

For more information:
Corey Bearak, ATU 1056 Policy & Political Director
(718) 343-6779/ (516) 343-6207