

Speak Out Now! at AC Transit 3/24/2025

VTA Workers Vote To Stay On Strike

Workers in ATU 265 at Valley Transit Authority (VTA), which operates the light rail and buses in the South Bay, began their third week on strike.

On March 24, VTA workers voted NO on the latest contract offer by 83%, continuing the strike into the third week. The union has been demanding wage increases of 18% over three years to help cover the rising cost of living. VTA increased their offer of 9% over three years to 11%, but they refused to agree not to discipline workers who went on strike. And they put back a demand that was already removed in earlier rounds of negotiations, which proposes to eliminate extra pay for overtime work. Management's attitude was made clear a few days ago when VTA Assistant General Manager, called VTA workers "uneducated" and undeserving of a living wage. It's as if VTA wanted workers to continue the strike.

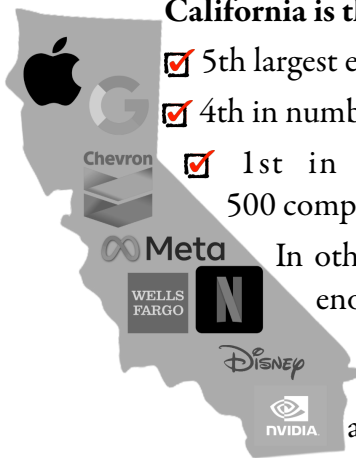
In these times, when Federal workers are getting fired by the thousands, and workers everywhere are seeing their standard of living under attack, workers need to draw the line. VTA workers are a reminder that we can stand up to the many attacks we face.

California Has the Money

California is the:

- ✓ 5th largest economy in the world.
- ✓ 4th in number of billionaires worldwide.
- ✓ 1st in the number of fortune 500 companies located in a U.S. state.

In other words, there is more than enough money in the state to fully fund transportation and education and housing and health care and ...



A Speak Out Socialists Public Meeting

Trump's Assault on the Planet is an Assault on Us!

Sunday, April 13 at 4pm
2727 California St.
Berkeley



AC: Raising Fares and Making Threats

The AC transit board just approved another fare hike, pushing the fare from \$2.50 to \$2.75 starting July 1, 2025, and then again to \$3 starting July 1, 2026.

The board says the fare increases are necessary because of a budget shortage that they claim is now \$45 million. Raising the fares by 25¢, even though it is a huge blow to riders, will only bring in an extra \$4.1 million, which is not much next to the \$45 million.

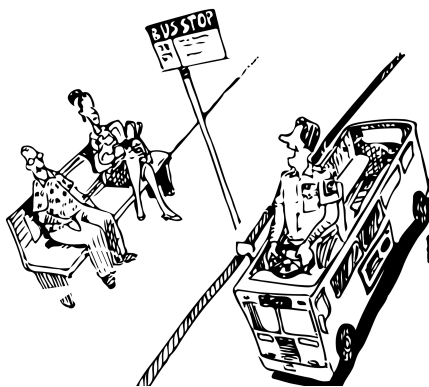
So, what is the real strategy the District plans to use to reduce the shortage? To cut wherever they can, what they say is "finding efficiencies within our operations to reduce costs." Efficiencies to reduce costs? Like getting more done with less? Like reducing the number of routes? Or the number of drivers or other workers?

They are sending the message out that more cuts are on the way. And now is the time for AC workers to start thinking about what their message is going to be.

Riders and Drivers Together

The District has made clear their plans to use the budget as their excuse to go after riders and workers. This fare hike is just the beginning. Now they are threatening to make cuts to operations, which includes workers and routes. We know they will try to pit workers against riders, just as the VTA has done.

But riders and drivers are on the same side. Good, affordable, public transportation requires fully staffed and well-paid public transit workers. We can't fall for their attempts to divide us.



"HOP ON! LET ME TELL YOU ABOUT THE LATEST BUDGET CUTS."

We do the work to make society run.
We need to organize!
Get in touch with us!



speakoutsocialists.org



@sonsocialists





Speak Out Now

March 24, 2025

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(510) 343-9105

We Must Resist Their Attempts to Silence Us!

On March 18th, Israel launched another massive assault and bombardment of Gaza, killing over 400 people in one day. This was one of the deadliest single days in Gaza since Israel's genocidal war on Palestine began in October 2023.

Israel's bombing broke the ceasefire with Hamas that was agreed in January. But in reality, this had not been a real ceasefire from the beginning. Even during the ceasefire agreement, Israel never stopped the violence and killed at least 170 people in Gaza, expanded military attacks in the West Bank, and continued to restrict the amount of humanitarian aid getting into Gaza, furthering mass starvation and the spread of disease. In the end, this so-called ceasefire was just a short pause while the Biden administration handed off control of the U.S.-fueled genocide to the Trump administration.

The Biden administration would pay lip service to the plight of innocent Palestinians, while they provided non-stop military and political support for Israel's genocide and total destruction of Gaza. With Trump, not much has changed, except he is willing to say the quiet part out loud, openly calling for the ethnic cleansing and forced expulsion of Palestinians from Gaza so it can be developed into the "riviera of the Middle East."

Trump campaigned on getting the U.S. out of foreign wars and prioritizing domestic problems. But since taking power, it is clear there is no meaningful difference between his and Biden's administration on their support for Israel's genocide. Since taking power, Trump has authorized almost \$12 billion dollars in new military aid to Israel. Meanwhile, his administration is ramming through massive tax cuts for billionaires and corporations, while gutting and privatizing government agencies that provide some support for working people.

He has now signed an executive order to dismantle the Department of Education, and is firing thousands of government workers in many departments, like the Social Security Administration, Environmental Protection Agency, Veterans Affairs and many more.

These actions reflect the priorities of U.S. imperialism — use the state's resources to maintain U.S. domination over strategic locations such as the Middle East, and get rid of any agency that helps ordinary people or regulates

corporations at home. They want to remove any obstacle to their profits and pillage any state spending that goes to the rest of us, sucking resources like the parasites they are.

Their blatant support for the massacre of Palestinians abroad, along with their slew of attacks here at home is becoming impossible to ignore, and resistance is growing. People are beginning to return to the streets in protest of these open attacks.

Protests have continued to develop, like those at Tesla dealerships, calling out the key role Elon Musk is playing in implementing these destructive policies, while his companies are handed tens of billions of dollars in government contracts. Both Republicans and Democrats are being forced to cancel town hall events and public speaking engagements because people continue to show up and speak out against all the policies being implemented — furious at the Republicans for proposing these policies, and furious at the Democrats for going along with them.

As opposition grows, it is no surprise we are seeing the Trump administration intensify their repression against those who stand up. It is not a coincidence that the government has captured, detained, and is threatening to deport Mahmoud Khalil, a graduate student at Columbia University who is a lawful permanent resident (a Green Card holder) who played a prominent role in the protests against the genocide in Gaza on that campus last year.

It is also no coincidence that they are now threatening those that protest at Tesla, with Trump saying, "we're going to catch you, and you're going to go through hell." They have even said that anyone who vandalizes a Tesla vehicle will be charged with "domestic terrorism," which can bring a sentence of 20 years in prison.

Trump and his cronies know that the only thing that can put a stop to their ruthless assault on our lives is mass resistance from the population. And their attacks are just getting started — they have much more in store. Their message is clear, they want to frighten people into submission, and to scare us into silence. Instead, let's turn their attacks into a rallying cry for resistance.

Now is the time to take a stand against Trump and the billionaires and their whole system that puts their profits over our lives.