

Speak Out Now! at AC Transit 7/13/2026

Drivers Aren't the Fare Police

The District is making a huge push to make drivers be the bus fare enforcers ever since the July 1 25¢ fare hike. They made drivers put digital signs on the buses that say "Fare Required." And there is a new announcement on the Bus about the fare requirement.

All of this is ridiculous. Fares barely bring in more money than it costs to collect them. They are not the main part of the budget. If the District wants to enforce fares, they can do it themselves. They even approved the use of fare enforcement agents a few years ago. Either way, drivers are not your fare police.

Drivers Safety Matters More Than Fares

A few years back, the District stopped making drivers announce the fare because it is dangerous for drivers to enforce the fare. And AC transit was one of the most dangerous bus systems for drivers in the country. But now the District is acting like none of that matters. They are now on this fare enforcement kick. But whether drivers announce the fare or not, they are still the only people the riders interface with. Drivers are still the ones the riders lash out against whenever anything happens.

Fare collection isn't worth the risk to driver safety. Every study shows the best way to reduce threats against drivers is to eliminate the fare. Instead of pushing to police the fare even more, if the District cared about driver safety and the public, they'd just eliminate fare collection completely.

AC Transit's Fare Enforcement



**Not Worth
the Trouble!**



The Toll For 7%

The 2025-26 AC budget was \$606.3 million, and the district brought in 7% of that from fare collection (or \$40 million). That seems like a lot. But the District's utilities and fuel costs went up, and bus parts went up 14%, and the costs of new buses jumped 35% in the past two years. With all that, how would going from 7% to 9% in fare collection revenue make much of a dent in the budget? It wouldn't!

A problem way more important than fare collection is neglect. Even though transit is an essential service, it's taken for granted. The feds and the state underfund transportation, and then the District doesn't prioritize maintenance and repairs, and they let systems get old and beaten down, and then everyone complains about the poor service.

But living in the Bay, public transit is as essential as the Bay Bridge, or highway 80 or 880. If one of those had an issue, they would be quick to rush in and repair it as quickly as possible, and they'd get the funds to do it. So public transit – an essential service for those who need it most – shouldn't only be an afterthought.

What Goes up Should Come Down

If the fare hikes are to cover budget shortages, then the fare hikes should come back down if other revenue is brought in. At least that would make sense.

There is a tax initiative on the ballot in November to increase the sales tax in Bay Area counties to fund transit. This is supposed to cover the budget shortfalls of Bay Area transit agencies, including at AC.

So if that money comes in, then there would be no excuse for all of these fare hikes. So, does that mean the District will lower the fares again if that money comes in? Well they sure should!

We will be taking a break for two weeks. See you back the week of August 10!

**It is our work that makes society run!
We have the power to change it!
Get in touch!**



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Speak Out Now

July 13, 2026

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We Can't Accept Their System of War and Destruction

The U.S. military has reignited its totally unnecessary, brutal war on Iran. In just the past several days, U.S. forces have struck more than 300 targets across the country, deliberately hitting bridges, power plants, and civilian infrastructure — clear war crimes — and killing dozens more people in this latest round of strikes.

Trump has taken to social media with escalating threats, boasting that the U.S. has thousands of missiles ready to fire and is prepared to decimate the country.

Iran has fired back. It has launched drones at U.S. military bases and oil infrastructure across the Gulf — in Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, and Oman. It has also begun firing on ships attempting to pass through the Strait of Hormuz, the narrow waterway in the Middle East through which a major share of the world's oil and gas flows every single day.

Back in June, a supposed 60-day ceasefire was agreed to, supposedly giving the U.S. and Iran time to negotiate how shipping would resume in the Strait of Hormuz and who would control it. They also planned negotiations over the future of Iran's nuclear program. But in reality, it was never a real ceasefire. The violence never stopped. One of the conditions of the ceasefire was that the U.S. would force Israel to halt its attacks on Lebanon, but instead, Israel has continued bombing and has now declared that it is permanently occupying new areas of southern Lebanon.

The reason for this renewed fighting is the Strait of Hormuz. Iran knows it is badly outgunned by the U.S., the largest military power in world history. But its one real source of leverage is its ability to disrupt traffic through the Strait through drone and missile attacks, and to disrupt the global economy. And this is leverage it does not want to give up given the repeated U.S. attacks and sanctions on Iran. Iran wants the war to end, but on terms more favorable to them. For example, they want to control which vessels can travel through the Strait, and they want the ability to charge ships a toll to pass through the waterway. Iran does not want to surrender this leverage and accept the U.S. dictating who controls the Strait.

U.S. imperialism on the other hand is unwilling to accept this. The U.S. does not want to give Iran official control over the Strait and has resumed bombings to once again try to force Iran to surrender or possibly take over the Strait militarily. The U.S. wants better control over the flow of oil and resources through the region and is willing to

continue this war to try and get it. So the U.S. has made the entire region a powder keg, with the threat of an even greater escalation hanging over everything.

And while this situation carries on, who actually pays? It is the ordinary people of Iran — with over three thousand dead, millions displaced from their homes, living without electricity, having their schools and universities bombed. The Iranian regime has imposed a crackdown on activists who speak out against the regime. Over 2 million people have lost their jobs, many have not been paid since the war began, and inflation is at 88%. Daily life continues to become increasingly difficult.

At the same time, the people of Lebanon and Palestine wake each day not knowing whether they will be killed in a strike or starve to death in Gaza — murdered by U.S.-Israeli wars they never chose to be a part of.

And in this country and around the world, it is ordinary people that pay the price as well. In the U.S. the resources poured into this war are being taken away from our own needs and redirected toward violence and repression. Estimates now put the cost of the war in Iran at some \$130 billion — money taken from the population that could fund hospitals, schools, housing, transportation, and more.

The longer this horrific war drags on, the greater the danger that it triggers a full international economic crisis, as the flow of oil and other essential goods is further choked off from people around the world.

And while the U.S. government funds these wars abroad, it is building up its machinery of repression at home. In Texas, activists have recently been handed prison sentences as long as 30 to 100 years for protesting ICE. In Minneapolis, organizers who stood up against the ICE occupation of their city have been indicted on conspiracy charges and may face prison time if convicted. This is what our government plans for those who dare to oppose them.

Those who rule our society are a threat to all of us. Their system of profit and exploitation requires wars of domination and destruction. We can't accept their system and the future they have in store for us. We have to oppose their system with everything we have. We must refuse to allow our lives and the lives of future generations to be destroyed. Our future depends on us gathering our forces to oppose their system.