

Speak Out Now! at AC Transit 8/15/2022

The Fight for the Fare

For those of us who have gone through the De-Escalation training at the TEC center, the district is finally recognizing that there are a whole lot of issues that we have to deal with on the daily. We take the heat from passengers when we're late, if we are missing a leader, if we got a hot bus, almost any little thing that could bother an already bothered passenger. The most common problem though, the Fare. It was stated by one of the instructors that the Fare is the most common issue argued about and causes the most assault / battery issues for drivers.

So why do we stress about it so much? Most OG's will tell you to state the fare and keep it pushing. One had the best advice to give to non-paying passengers, 'Just make my box jingle a little bit and keep it moving.' If the goal was to seriously de-escalate tensions between operators and passengers, they would say, don't worry about the fare at all! Over 65% of AC's ridership is low-income, we shouldn't need to nickel and dime every person all day every day!

More Platform Time, More Open Runs

It's that time of year again, we just started our divisional signup and have maybe settled into a different yard. But what seems to be up with these runs? It seems like there are more hours on most of the runs, which means more time spent at work. On top of that, there seems to be more open runs, which means your chances of not getting relieved are running higher, which means more time at work. Too much time at work, and people start to feel like they might need a mental health day from work. And the cycle continues.

Maybe there's not enough people to fill the runs? Or maybe the runs are filled by regular human beings, who need a healthy work / life balance to stay healthy and live their life. Do we actually live to work, or are we stuck working to live?

No Money For Public Transit?

It's looking like congress just passed a \$369 billion climate bill. There will be some important steps like tax credits for electric vehicles, and subsidies for households purchasing solar power.

But make no mistake, this plan will be nowhere near adequate to address the mounting climate crisis. Of the many things missing in the bill is any support for public transit or high-speed rail. Building a real transit infrastructure that people could rely on could do a lot in taking cars off the road, and reducing greenhouse gasses. Why is there no support for public transit? What gives?

Two "Justice Systems", For Them And Just-Us

Recently, Donald Trump's home in Mar-A-Lago has gotten raided by the FBI, under the pretense that he has taken classified documents. At this point, there is a lot that is unclear about the situation and how it will play out.

But what couldn't be more clear is that we live in a society that has two very different justice systems - one for the rich and powerful and one for the rest of us. Whether Donald Trump or any other former presidents or powerful people are ever held accountable for any of their crimes is difficult to imagine. Were the people who lied to start the war in Iraq ever held accountable? How about the people who crashed the economy in 2008 with their financial funny business? Of course not! But for us, it seems like we are treated as "guilty until proven innocent" for the smallest infractions. If we truly lived in a free and just society, would it really be this way?

