Speak Out Now at BART October 19, 2026)

Transparency!

The coming election could have an impact on the Bay Area, especially some of the ballot initiatives. For people who rely on public transit, for transportation or for a job, the Regional Transit Measure will make a difference. If it passes, it will raise taxes on retail sales by one-half a cent for every dollar spent and the majority of the money will go to the transit agencies in the the five-county Bay Area. If it doesn't pass, who knows what will happen?

The funding expected to go to BART, AC Transit, and some of the other agencies will not cover their projected operational deficits. So who will decide what gets cut? Will they really be looking at who does what at BHQ and how necessary those jobs are to operations?

People who know how this system runs should provide the oversight and decision-making. Open the books. Have a full audit by outside experts and discuss it with a committee of people who actually do the work.

Why should those who have been running this system continue to make the decisions?

What Were They Doing?

Over the past year, BART Management claims they have found ways to save money through cost-saving measures that didn't have a negative impact on operations.

As long as the Covid money was there, it was business as usual. But once that money began to run out, they opened their eyes and saw ways to save money? What were they doing all these years?

And these people are going to be allowed to continue to be running this system with no oversight?

When ICE Melts

A documentary about the resistance to the ICE occupation of Minneapolis

Thursday, October 29, 6:30pm

Berkeley City College 2050 Center St.

(near Downtown Berkeley BART)

Free - You can donate to support the defense of the MN15 - the fifteen people who face federal criminal charges for being active in the opposition to the ICE occupation in the Twin Cities.

Thousands of people are being abducted by ICE each month across the country, including the Bay Area. Even the home of Ilhan Omar, Minneapolis rep to Congress, was invaded and her property seized by federal agents.

It Would Be Nice to Know

How many times are Station Agents left in the dark when there are disruptions in service? With all the Blue Coats scurrying around the system, they might have come to the realization that Station Agents aren't just sitting there doing nothing. If they lifted their eyes, they would see a big "INFORMATION" sign on the top of every booth. And they would see passengers coming to the booths for assistance of all sorts.

When trains aren't running on time, passengers need to know what is going on. And they look to those who are responsible for information. It is assumed that Station Agents would know. They are viewed as being responsible for the functioning of the system. And when it isn't functioning, whether it is because of a fare machine eating money or an important appointment that might be missed, this can lead to some angry and sometimes dangerous responses by passengers.

Agents have to rely on informal networks for information about real-time operations, so-called upgrades to the system, and other things that impact the system. It is a necessity to be able to provide customer service.

How about those in management positions, managing to provide what frontline workers need to do their jobs and stop trying to manage them?

Priorities?

BART, aka the real estate company that also runs trains, has been building its rep as an entertainment outfit. They promote events that are easily reached by riding BART, which is nice. Does BART get something for the free advertising?

They promoted FIFA, even making signs telling people where to watch televised events. They have promoted events, both on and off the trains – like the "prom" at Rockridge and the Anime fest at Berryessa. That might increase ridership the day of the event and put BART in the news.

But the reality is that people who ride BART are more interested in the reliability of the system than BART's ability to stage these events.

BART is crying that the system is facing a financial crisis. Did BART Management ever hear the phrase "playing music while the Titanic sank"? This seems to be what BART is doing as they cry about the "fiscal cliff".

What's going on? Sometimes it can seem like what's happening is only where you are. Use this newsletter to let others know. Pass it on to a co-worker or put it in the break room.

Speak Out Now
October 5, 2026 @sonsocialists speakoutsocialists.org mail@speakoutsocialists.org (510) 343-9105

Another Example of the Sexual Violence Rooted in Our Society

Last month, a former student at Cornell University in New York filed a lawsuit alleging that she was drugged and raped by seven men who were members of a campus fraternity in 2024. The men reportedly forced her to repeatedly snort ketamine while they raped her, and they sent a group text out to their fraternity with 57 members on it to join in. None of them reported the incident to the police.

Weeks after the incident, the survivor, known as "Jane Doe" in the lawsuit, reported the assault to the university and campus police. In response, the university conducted an investigation that resulted in the expulsion of only two of the men, while the others were merely suspended and had to write essays reflecting on their actions. The local district attorney at the time also declined to pursue criminal charges against any of them even though in her initial report to the police she clearly said, “I can say with 100% confidence I was raped."

The traumatic experience forced Jane to drop out of school, while five of the seven men who assaulted her were allowed to continue their education. In September of this year she filed a lawsuit against the university and the men.

This story confirms what women and survivors already know: sexual violence in this country is constant. One in five women is raped in her lifetime. At universities nationally, one in five female college students say they were sexually assaulted during their years on campus, and most of these assaults go unreported, some for fear of exactly what happened at Cornell. Cornell's own student survey, released in November 2025, found that 35 percent of undergraduate women reported being sexually assaulted during their time there.

The way this investigation was handled shows how the experiences of women are trivialized by those in power. And how many times has a story like this repeated across elite campuses? Young men at elite universities like Cornell are often the children of the wealthy, who have power and financial connections that can get them out of trouble. They can treat women in this way and face no consequences.

This mirrors how society works outside of college campuses. Look at the Epstein network: wealthy elites could sexually traffic young girls for years because they had money, connections, and protection. And predators like those in the Epstein Files don't emerge from nowhere; they go to elite schools for the rich like Cornell. They are raised in a world where they think their wealth and power allows them to do whatever they want.

Cornell has pursued harsher punishments for pro-Palestine student activists than it has for students accused of rape. Since the start of the genocide in Gaza in October 2023, Cornell has both suspended and expelled students from campus for participating in peaceful protests against Israel’s genocide. Cornell’s president has even backed his car into pro-Palestine protestors on campus. In the eyes of Cornell, protesting genocide gets you expelled, while sexual assault gets you an extra writing assignment. We see these same priorities at elite universities across the country.

The culture of male dominance that enables this violence is everywhere. Pete Hegseth, the Secretary of War, is now promoting testosterone screenings in the military. On billboards, in magazines, commercials, TV shows and movies, women's mostly naked bodies are used to sell everything. Advertisers and fashion companies profit from women's bodies. Men absorb these daily messages and are encouraged to see women as objects rather than human beings worthy of dignity.

We live in a male-dominated society that values men's lives over women's, one that accepts and even encourages violence against women. But although men are overwhelmingly the perpetrators, the roots of this epidemic go far beyond individual men. We live in a society where disregard for human life is normal and expected, where workers must sell their labor to corporations just to survive, and where corporations use us up and throw us away. The bosses who run this society have always used discrimination, whether by gender, race, ethnicity or religion, to divide us and protect their control.

But organized together, we can look out for one another. We can band together to punish and stop sexual predators. Ultimately, the fight to end violence against women and win equality for women is simultaneously a fight to build a different society, one where all people, men and women, have control over our own bodies and our own lives and collectively run society in our own interests.