

# Speak Out Now at BART (4/17/2023)

## Yes, It's The System

Station Agents face threats of attacks every day. No matter how alert and conscientious a worker is, an attack can seem to come out of nowhere. These can be deeply traumatic events, especially when a worker faces returning to “their station.” And often it is “their station” — one where they have worked regularly or on and off for years, know people, help people regularly who have disabilities as well as first-time riders and those visiting from all parts of the world.

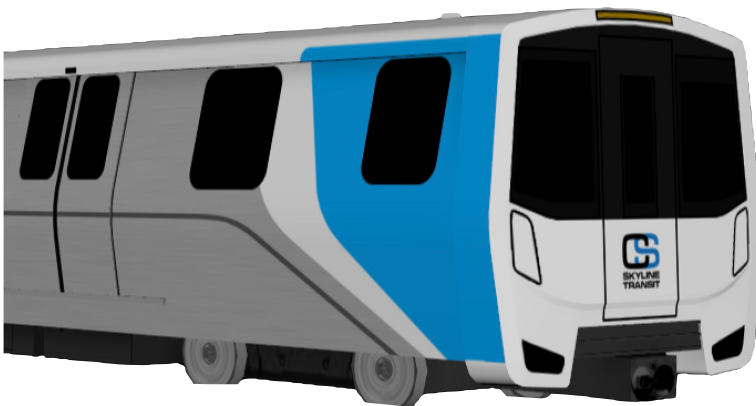
Yes, these attacks are a consequence of the system we are living in...but it is collapsing on us. The safety of everyone in the system is essential. There are many steps that could be taken that could begin to deal with this, but the useful ones won't come from the Board or Management.

How about talking with the people who work the stations and know what is happening?

## CalPERS and the Climate Crisis

There is a proposal in the California State Senate to require that the CalPERS pension system divest from fossil fuel investments by 2030. CalPERS's board opposes the proposal. The major unions such as SEIU and ATU have not taken a position on this.

We shouldn't have to choose between our retirement being invested in companies destroying the environment or protecting the planet.



*Did some Train Operators look at early prototypes of the FoF and wonder about those wheels?*

## \$2.7 Million For What?

Almost four years ago, the Governor appointed an Inspector General who was supposed to “*examine BART's operating practices to identify fraud, waste, and opportunities for efficiencies in administration of its programs and operations.*”

Last month the person appointed to the job quit four months early, basically saying that she would rather play with her dogs than continue to wrestle with BART Management over various investigations. She did turn up examples of wasted money, various high-paid BART staff using their positions to get contracts.

Recently the MTC (Metropolitan Transportation Commission) decided to increase the budget for the next Inspector General's operation from \$1million to \$2.7 million. This would take \$600,000 from BART's operating budget and \$1million from bridge tolls.

What's going on? Did the MTC order this to please State Senator Steve Glazer, who is notorious for attacking BART workers?

There are hundreds of people who work at BART who could point to “waste and fraud” at BART, but is that what they are really looking for? Or is this going to be another excuse to try to come down on frontline workers? Their crazy math doesn't add up.

## Time For a Recert?

With all the focus on what is going on in the stations by the media, it would make sense for those who represent the system to know what they are talking about. How about having them go through a special recert or certification?

Why not have all Board members, top management and others who set policy spend a day in the booth (with an agent), a day working with a System Service worker and other positions BART workers think would open their eyes to reality.

This isn't a photo-op session, surrounded by BART police, but a day in the life, in stations selected by BART workers. It should start with opening or end with closing the station. It probably won't change anything, but it would be a dose of reality.

**Essential Workers**, an online talk and discussion with Jamie McCallum, author & activist who will talk about his travels during the pandemic meeting, with workers and hearing about the conditions they faced and the actions they took to defend themselves and the organizing that continues today.

**Sunday, April 23, 4pm** Info & zoom link at [speakoutsocialists.org](http://speakoutsocialists.org). (DON'T MISS IT!)