



REHIRE THE FOUR FIRED DRIVERS! DROP THE TRUMPED-UP FELONY CHARGES AGAINST GRIEVANCE CHAIR KIRSCHBAUM! AN INJURY TO ONE IS AN INJURY TO ALL!

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

An injury to one is an injury to all!

The slogan has been around a long time—over a century—and it might almost seem cliché if it were not so true. As progressive union people we feel it in our bones. That's why we answer the call whenever a sister union has a tough fight foisted on it by union-hating bosses. It's why, over the years, we have lent our moral and material resources to the United Farm Workers; adopted families during the long strikes at Phelps-Dodge, Hormel, Caterpillar, the Detroit newspapers and others; and given solidarity to workers around the world, from South Africa to Haiti to Colombia to Palestine.

In that spirit we are asking for your help. We need you to come to the aid of the Boston School Bus Drivers Union—Steelworkers Local 8751. This is as militant, as class conscious and as anti-racist a union that you will find anywhere. These drivers organized their union forty years ago in the heat of battle, while they were having to drive through a hail of rocks and bricks hurled by hard core racists determined to stop school desegregation. Not an easy task, to fight the racists and at the same time fight the school board and private bus companies for union recognition and a first contract. But they did it and they have survived numerous attacks during the past four decades. They have always stepped up to the plate when their solidarity was needed by workers and communities in struggle, whether around the corner or around the world.

Almost all of their 800-plus-strong force are Haitian, Cape Verdean, Latino/a, or African-American who have battled racism and corporate greed on and off the job. At this moment in time they are in the streets alongside the heroic youth of Black Lives Matters Boston while preparing to strike to defend their rights.

Now they are in the fight of their lives. The notorious France-based Veolia corporation took over school transportation in Boston in 2013, hell-bent on breaking this union and they are not without allies. Powerful forces in the political establishment, media and courts are arrayed against the local, with the aim of dismantling school transportation and re-segregating the schools. They have ordered this transnational monster to provide what it does best: imposing austerity.

Four union leaders—Andre Francois, Gary Murchison, Steve Gillis and Steve Kirschbaum—have been fired. They haven't worked since October 9, 2013. Their unemployment benefits have long since run out. And if that was not bad enough, one of the four, Brother Kirschbaum, is facing years in jail under trumped-up felony charges with the trial beginning February 2. Veolia got the city to file these charges after Steve, who is Chair of the Grievance Committee, led a legally protected meeting in a bus yard.

And in the midst of all this the concessionary contract demands of Veolia are so egregious that members voted unanimously just before the new year to begin strike preparations.

They cannot win this fight alone—what union ever could?

By now you want to know how you can help. Here are a few concrete things you can do right now:

If you have not signed the labor-community solidarity statement (to sign go to schoolbusunion5.org) please sign—or even better get your union to sign.

Pass a resolution at your next union meeting (sample resolution attached)

Call, and have your members call:

Mayor Martin J. Walsh [617-635-4500](tel:617-635-4500) fax: [617-635-2851](tel:617-635-2851) mayor@boston.gov

School Superintendent John McDonough [\(617\) 635-9050](tel:617-635-9050) fax: [\(617\) 635-9059](tel:617-635-9059) superintendent@bostonpublicschools.org

General Manager Alex Roman III [617-603-7800](tel:617-603-7800) alexander.roman@veoliatransdev.com

Demand the four be rehired immediately.

Call Suffolk County DA Daniel Conley, [617-619-4000](tel:617-619-4000) fax [617-619-4210](tel:617-619-4210).

Demand the charges against Stevan Kirschbaum be dropped

Please donate. The fired workers and their families are struggling now and more funds will be needed in the event of a strike. You can help by going to the website at <http://www.youcaring.com/schoolbus4> to contribute and/or get the word out to other friends and supporters, or send a check to Friends of the School Bus 5, P.O. Box 141, Stoughton, MA 02072. You can also host a meeting and invite a bus driver to speak at the event.

Get in touch with us to discuss further ways to build solidarity:

www.schoolbus5.org teamsolidarity@schoolbusunion5.org

Labor outreach coordinator [216-534-6435](tel:216-534-6435)

on facebook: Team Solidarity – the voice of the school bus union workers

Thank you for your support.
In solidarity,

Howie Rotman, President AFSCME 1489 (Boston City Hospital, 1972-2003)

Larsene Taylor, President, UE local 150, North Carolina Public Sector workers Union, and National General Executive Board member of United Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers of America (UE).

Myles Calvey, Business Manager IBEW 2222

Parents to Improve School Transportation (PIST)

Shane Hoff, Delegate to the San Francisco Labor Council for SMART 1741 (formerly UTU 1741)

Jim Charas, Vice Chairperson, SMART 1741

Local Committee of Adjustment of SMART 1741

Brenda Stokely, member, SSE local 371/DC 37/AFSCME (id purpose only); Million Worker March Northeast Co-regional organizer.

Clarence Thomas, past secretary treasurer ILWU LOCAL 10, (id purpose only)

Chuck Turner, former Boston City Councillor

Charles Yancey, Boston City Councillor

Mel King, Veteran Boston African-American community leader

Dawnasia Yancey, Boston Black Lives Matter

Sandra McIntosh, Co-Chair, Coalition for Equal Quality Education, Boston

Charles Clemons, General Manager, Touch 106.1 Boston—Fabric of the Black Community

Armando Robles, President, UE Local 1110, former Republic Windows and Doors, now New Era Workers-Owned Co-op, Chicago

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