



*A bold voice for transportation workers*

March 27, 2019

### Cosponsor S. 436 – the Transit Worker and Pedestrian Protection Act of 2019

Dear Senator:

On behalf of the Transportation Trades Department, AFL-CIO (TTD), I urge you to cosponsor **S. 436, the Transit Worker and Pedestrian Protection Act**. This common-sense legislation will help address the ever-growing epidemic of assaults committed against transit workers, enhance pedestrian safety, and facilitate needed improvements to the bus operator work station.

TTD and our affiliated unions have long called for federal action to protect operators who are simply doing their jobs and providing for their families — a call that was renewed just last year. Unfortunately, recent news stories have shown us just how pressing this issue is. Just two weeks ago, a CTA worker found himself caught between a violent altercation that left him with stab wounds to his chest and abdomen. Other horrific stories, like this bus operator who had urine thrown on her, this North Dakota operator who was assaulted by a teenager, and this gruesome story of a pregnant operator who was sent to the hospital after being attacked in New Jersey, each highlight just how troubling daily life has become for America's transit workforce.

Attacks like these not only put the bus operator at risk, but also endanger passengers and other road users. And, as this operator points out, these attacks cause psychological trauma for years to come. It should come as no surprise that transit agencies are having a harder and harder time filling these jobs.

To help put a stop to these atrocious attacks, Senator Chris Van Hollen has reintroduced **S. 436, the Transit Worker and Pedestrian Protection Act of 2019**, formerly the Bus Operator and Pedestrian Protection Act. This bill will require transit agencies, in cooperation with front-line employees, to develop a risk reduction plan using a data-driven analysis of an agency's bus operations. Based on the results of these analyses, agencies will be required to deploy strategies — tailored to meet the needs of each transit system — that improve safety and working conditions, including the utilization of operator shields and de-escalation training.



The bill also requires transit agencies to conduct similar risk reduction analyses on visual obstructions and the ergonomic design of the operator workstation. Large pillars and poorly positioned mirrors create significant blind spots for bus operators that have sadly left hundreds of pedestrians dead or badly injured at no fault of the bus operator. In addition, workstation designs that don't protect the operator's ergonomic health can cause significant damage to their bodies over the course of their careers. This legislation would go a long way towards solving both of these serious problems.

I urge you to support this important legislation and to enhance the safety of bus operators, passengers and those that share the streets with these transit vehicles. To cosponsor S. 436, please contact Deborah Haynie in Sen. Van Hollen's office at 224-4654 or Deborah\_Haynie@vanhollen.senate.gov.

Sincerely,



Larry I. Willis  
President