

**Gray Panthers of San Francisco**  
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Mayor Ed Lee  
City Attorney Dennis Herrera  
San Francisco Supervisors  
MTA Transportation Director Edward Reiskin,

June 9, 2014

We, as members of the Gray Panthers of San Francisco, demand the City not press charges against MUNI drivers or their union and give drivers a fair contract.

MTA's proposed wage increases, together with increased health and pension costs, will result in a net loss in pay for drivers, who have not had a pay raise for four years, yet MTA has given up millions in parking revenue and still has a budget surplus. The contract proposal contains permanently lower wages for new hires, an affront to our principles of inter-generational solidarity. The City's charge against the union of delaying the ratification vote is based on the expectation that the drivers would be forced to vote before they had time to consider the implications of the proposed agreement. Similarly, the charge of delaying arbitration is based on the expectation that the union would submit to a process with a pre-determined outcome without any resistance.

Proposition G puts MUNI drivers in an impossible position: Wages must be determined by collective bargaining, but the City Charter prohibits them from striking. If drivers reject any contract proposal by MTA management, no matter how outrageous, the dispute must go to binding arbitration, which must side with management unless the arbitrator decides the drivers' interests "outweighs the public interest in efficient and reliable transit." Under these circumstances, drivers must accept whatever management proposes, or stage a sickout. What did the City expect to happen?

By taking actions against drivers and their union, the City is actively participating in a coercive labor process that will ultimately bring wider and more disruptive conflict to San Francisco. In an economic environment where San Francisco is unaffordable for its workers, and has the fastest-growing gap between rich and poor, it would be wise to realize that workers will not accept this treatment indefinitely.

The City's mass media has long slandered drivers as greedy, incompetent, and rude, for performing some of the most difficult driving assignments in the country, but do not count on the media's ability to permanently turn the community against MUNI workers. Members of the biggest union of the most poorly-paid City workers' union are also in negotiations, and are angry at the City's determination to hold wage increases down in the face of rising inflation, a budget surplus, and millions of dollars in tax breaks to tech companies. Times can change. Times will change.

Do not press charges against MUNI drivers or their union and give drivers a fair contract.

Sincerely

Michael Lyon, Treasurer  
Patricia Jackson, Convener  
Denise D'Anne, Secretary