



USW Local 8751 - District 4

Boston School Bus Drivers' Union

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Wage Freeze & Layoffs, We Say No Way! Make the Bankers and Corporations Pay!

Statement of the Boston School Bus Drivers' Union, Steelworkers Local 8751 leadership, in Response to Mayor Menino's Jan. 13, 2009, "State of the City" Concession Demands

Tuesday night's "State of the City" speech by Mayor Menino was a dream come true for Bank of America/Merrill Lynch/Countrywide, Fidelity, AIG, Gillette, Northeastern University, the swank Taj hotel, the Vault (aka Boston Municipal Research Bureau), and all the **bankers and corporate representatives** who came, "grim faced" according to the Boston Globe, to cheer **their mayor** on. Not once did Menino mention the mortgage swindlers, the debt predators, the stocks, bonds and hedge fund schemers, the billion dollar golden parachutes and tax freeloaders whose unbridled profiteering has caused the current, unprecedented economic crisis.

Instead, the mayor has outrageously called on Union leaders to help him bust their own members' hard-earned labor agreements, whose meager wages and disappearing benefits today cause Boston's working women and men to choose between trying to stop criminal foreclosures and evictions, staying off the brutal cold, paying for skyrocketing health insurance, or properly feeding their families.

Our answer to the mayor's "State of the City" concession demands is simple and clear:

No Way! We, the leadership of USW Local 8751, will not cooperate!

Hands off all of our Unions!

We stand shoulder to shoulder in solidarity with our sisters and brothers who put out the fires, teach and feed our children and clean our schools, maintain our water supply and sewage treatment, clear, repair, and maintain our streets and parks, staff our libraries and recreational facilities, answer the phones and process the city's services, rescue and care for the sick, elderly, homeless and abused, and run and maintain the city's entire infrastructure. **We stand with those working people ready to fight for and defend their rights from the fallout of unprecedented corporate greed and the economic depression it has caused.**

In addition, we charge Mayor Menino's government administration with illegally interfering with private collective bargaining on behalf of a private corporation, First Student, an Unfair Labor Practice as defined by the National Labor Relations Act (the Wagner Act) of 1935. **WE ARE NOT CITY WORKERS AND HE KNOWS IT!** As a government official, the mayor has no business demanding concessions from our 800 members, who recently concluded a 3-year labor agreement with the private British-owned transnational corporation First Student, Inc. (FirstGroup, PLC). First Student's expansion and monopoly acquisitions in the U.S. – reaping \$525.774 million in operating profit in the first quarter 2008 – last year propelled it into the British FTSE 100, the stock exchange serving England's 100 largest and most profitable companies. When First Student bought its largest U.S. competitor, Laidlaw/Greyhound, in 2007, maneuvering around anti-trust laws with Bush officials and threatening to pull out of Boston if it didn't get more money, the City awarded a no bid back door contract with a \$6 million bonus to its existing management fee.

Some of the world's largest banks and financial institutions – from BoA to the Royal Bank of Scotland's Citizens Bank to Fidelity – have for decades lined their balance sheets with \$\$ hundreds of billions from deposits and debt from Boston's workers, and \$\$ hundreds of millions more from taxpayer debt service and fees from Boston municipal bonds. They have also been the recipients of nearly a trillion dollars of federal taxpayer bailout money as reward for their mismanagement. **It is clear where Mayor Menino should look to cover his projected \$140 million shortfall: to the banks, the corporations, and the high stakes real estate developers.**

On the 80th Anniversary of the Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s birth, it is time to rekindle the flame of the movement for economic justice – uniting labor and the communities in the fight to Fund his historic Dream! The entire labor movement and all who support justice must stand in solidarity with our sisters and brothers in City Unions.

NO WAGE FREEZE! NO CUTBACKS! NO LAYOFF! NO CUTS IN SERVICES!

Declare a Freeze on Debt Service to the Predator Banks!

Hands off Our Union Contracts!

Together in SOLIDARITY we can win!

Unity! Unidá!



Inité! Unidáde!