

February 13, 2019

TO: County Executive Chris Abele
County Board of Supervisors Chairman Theo Lipscomb
Supervisor John Weishan, Chair, Committee on Transportation, Public Works & Transit

FROM: Pam Fendt, president, Milwaukee Area Labor Council
DiAndre Jackson, president, Coalition of Black Trade Unionists, Milwaukee Chapter
Larry Hall, president, A. Philip Randolph Institute, Milwaukee Chapter
Tracey Schwerdtfeger and Jacob Flom, co-chairs, MALC Young Workers Committee
Walter Garron, president, Labor Council for Latin American Advancement, Milwaukee Chapter

We are writing to communicate our shared concerns about the ongoing negotiations between MCTS and ATU 998. Negotiations have been going on for the better part of a year, we hope a resolution will soon be reached. Mr. Dan Boehm of MCTS recently testified at the County's Transportation committee that "Our collective desire for labor peace needs to be carefully balanced against the impacts of changes in the major cost items affected by labor negotiations..." That is bargaining 101. Has it really taken this long for the company to realize the issues at play will be wages and benefits?

We also are writing to raise concerns about the role of Mr. Nate Holton, who has sent a truly astonishing letter to Mr. James Macon, the duly elected president of local union ATU 998. We recall that Mr. Holton initially was the director of the County's Office on African American Affairs. We don't understand the role Mr. Holton is now playing in the negotiations between MCTS and ATU, and we are shocked that someone would address a community leader in such a demeaning fashion. The supposed problem behaviors of which he accuses Mr. Macon are, to our mind, the demonstration of President Macon's commitment to represent and protect the members of his union on the job and at the bargaining table, and protected concerted activity.

We pledge our solidarity to our brothers and sisters in ATU 998 and look for those with influence over the company side of the negotiations to take the part of the workers as the contract is completed.