

# Solidarity Road

**ATU Local 1700**  
**Winter 2016**

## Countdown to Nov. 8 Election

**ATU-COPE activists roll up their sleeves to raise working Americans' demands in national, state and local races.**

**T**he fight for America's political future is on. In February, the first caucuses and primaries began indicating what Republican and Democratic voters want in their presidential candidates.

The balloting will roll through the states until District of Columbia voters go to the polls on June 14. Visit us online to see when your state will hold its primary: <http://www.270towin.com/2016-election-calendar/>

After Republican and Democratic conventions meet in July, the presidential and vice presidential candidates will debate in September and October. And then our future will be in your hands. Don't wait until Tuesday, Nov. 8, to get active.

Apathetic and cynical voices claim all politicians are the same and that voting doesn't change anything. If that was true, banks, corporations and billionaires wouldn't spend money hand over fist to elect their candidates and pass their laws.

Your job, wages and working conditions are directly linked to politics. Federal, state and local governments make crucial decisions everyday that determine



*Democratic primary voters have a choice between Hillary Clinton and Bernie Sanders, and the decision might come down to the party convention this summer in Philadelphia. The crowded field of Republican candidates are all opposed to national health care, public transportation, and civil, women's and labor rights.*



the issues that concern working people."

Democrats, meanwhile, must decide whether Hillary Clinton or Bernie Sanders would make the best candidate and successor to President Barack Obama.

You can have a direct impact on the political process by helping to elect and holding accountable the public officials who make the decisions. ATU's Committee On Political Education

(COPE) is the country's largest political action committee of transit workers.

The law prohibits unions from using members' dues to fund political campaigns, so voluntary contributions to ATU-COPE are used to help elect pro-labor, pro-transit candidates for local, state and federal office. Once the election is over, we work closely with the officials we helped elect to make sure that our members' interests are well represented.

"Elections have consequences," said Region 2 V.P. Dwayne Franklin, "and we have no way of getting government to pay attention to our needs if we don't get the right people in office."

the safety and security standards at work, as well as your union rights and more.

Most Americans resent the runaway corporate profits and tax dodges that have made every day Christmas for the super-rich, while low wages and part-time jobs have gutted the middle class.

Income inequality hasn't been an issue in the Republican debates. Instead, Donald Trump and the rest of the pack have tried to distract voters by peddling fear of everything from immigrants and Islam to Russia.

"The Republican Party today is a mockery," said Local 1700 President Jimmie McCoy. "They aren't even talking about

**INSIDE**

**ATU 1700 National Roundup**

# No One Likes a Bully

By President Jimmie McCoy

I hope 101-year-old Greyhound learns a few lessons during the company's second century. The first is that no one likes a bully. The second is that bullies pay a high price for their bad behavior.

After years on the skids, the intercity bus business is on the upswing. Everything from the high cost of owning a car to on-board wi-fi has made commuting popular again. And Greyhound is the best-known brand on the highway.

The company has been dealt a good hand, but how is it playing its cards? By refusing to recognize the contribution that terminal workers make to travelers' comfort, by cracking down on mechanics for a tardiness problem that doesn't exist, and by overworking drivers until they quit.

That last one may really bite the dog

back. Greyhound lost 539 drivers in 2015. For those that remain, fatigue is up and morale is down. This road can only lead to disaster.

ATU Local 1700 is determined to change the bully's behavior. We reached an agreement that should lighten the load on Extra Board drivers that went into effect during the holidays, and we have reversed several discharges involving Drive-Cams.

Greyhound is short on Extra Board drivers from coast to coast. In Region 5, for example, Denver wants 26 Extra Board drivers, but only has two. Seattle doesn't have any. As a result, the company is overworking the few drivers they have, even on their days off, and sending them all over the country.

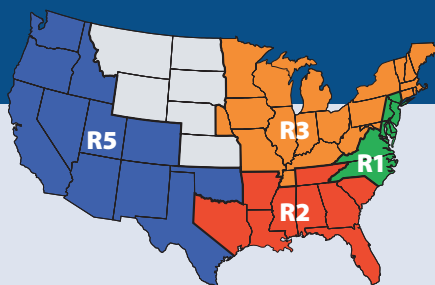
Under the new agreement, Extra Board drivers won't be on the road more

than 10 hours a day, or 70 hours during an 8-day period. We also set boundaries so the company doesn't send them all over the country. Greyhound is so short of drivers, however, that if someone reaches their boundary and he or she is the only driver there the company can send them on.

The union and company agreed to try this system with new Extra Board drivers. If it works well, we'll talk about including older drivers.

When it comes to Drive-Cams, drivers (and mechanics) can avoid 95 percent of the write-ups by staying off their phones and putting on their seat belts. We have won some cases on technicalities, and even gotten back pay for some drivers, but the law is clear: you cannot use electronic devices while driving.

Those two advances won't stop the loss of older and younger employees. The company needs to give people a reason to stay, and that begins by stopping the bullying.



## Region 1

### Philly Maintenance Under Fire

The Philadelphia-based national representative for Greyhound mechanics said the Local 1700 contract has no written attendance policy, but the company is imposing arbitrary penalties on maintenance workers.

"We have never had a written policy," Mark Clark said, "but when we've suggested some numbers the company says that would be like telling workers how many days they can be late without getting in trouble."

Instead of negotiating with the union, he added, managers are reviewing employees' attendance records for the previous year and imposing penalties without regard to progressive discipline.

## ATU 1700 National Roundup

For example, maintenance workers who move a bus without wearing a seat belt have been fired, even for a first offense.

"There's no problem of work not getting done, but they're discharging people and starting a paper trail for further discipline," Clark said. "Even when they bring an employee back the same day, now they have a discharge on their record that they can hold over the employee."

## Region 2

### Baton Rouge Back on the Grid

Life changed in Louisiana after Hurricane Katrina slammed into the Gulf Coast in 2005. Baton Rouge driver Euradean Stewart moved in with relatives in Houston and was based there for a year.

Even after Stewart moved home she had to commute to New Orleans every other day for the next nine years. The 170-mile round trip gets old. Baton Rouge is now open for business again and no

one is happier than Stewart.

"I'm from here," she said, "and now I don't have to leave home to go to work."

Stewart, who has worked for Greyhound for 38 years, is driving a Connect bus. The federal government subsidizes the service to keep smaller cities in Louisiana, Alabama, Illinois, Missouri and Maryland/D.C. on the transportation grid.

ATU members drove Connect buses until Greyhound contracted out the work years ago. The union recently convinced it to bring back the routes.

## Region 3

### Biting back at the Roach Motel

The last thing drivers want after a run is a foul-smelling hotel room with a bug-infested bed and no food service, but ATU Local 1700 regularly receives complaints about unacceptable lodging. Louisville's Clarion Hotel could be the poster child for this national problem.

## The Bottom Line

# Local 1700 is Poised to Meet Any Challenge

By Sammie Howard  
Financial Secretary-Treasurer

**F**inancial health and the proper management of those precious resources are the muscle and bone of a serious and strong union.

Money measures how effectively a union can represent its members – from filing a simple grievance and going to arbitration to defend an individual's well-being, all the way up to fighting unfair labor practices and negotiating contracts for our collective well-being. Mismanaging those finances can quickly weaken even the strongest union.

Detroit driver Zachary Bruner recently sent an angry email about the Clarion to Greyhound District Manager Brian Rogers and copied Region 3 VP Herman Green. "The company that employs (us) seems not to care about our health and well-being. Prove us wrong!"

Rogers responded that he stayed at the Clarion for three nights in three of the eight rooms where drivers are housed, and inspected the other five rooms. "I found no issues with the cleanliness or service," he wrote, adding, "I can see no need to relocate our drivers."

Green said those rooms might have been fine when Rogers visited, but they aren't the ones usually assigned to drivers, and rattled off a series of reports he has received. "I want members to email me their complaints about lodging, and include photos showing the conditions. We're going to fight this."

### Region 5 Rolling Thunder in Northwest

Bolt is big on the Portland-Seattle Corridor. Its buses are filled with col-

The Bottom Line: a financially unstable organization is, at best, ineffective.

ATU Local 1700 has never backed down for lack of resources during the more than 20 years since it was created. We won't start today.

As we start 2016 and prepare for the struggles ahead, Local 1700 is financially poised to meet any challenge to our members' pursuit of fair treatment and a quality work environment.

As your new Financial Secretary-Treasurer, my goal is to manage our resources with stability, integrity and transparency. That is the foundation for a strong union that members can be proud of and rely on.

lege students, tech workers and other commuters, and that's great news for the curbside carrier's drivers, who are members of ATU Local 1700.

Eight Bolt drivers are usually based in Portland, with another eight or nine in Seattle. The current union contract puts them in the top wage tier for intercity carriers.

Although Greyhound owns Bolt, Local 1700 Steward Marie Cervantes – who drove for Greyhound for years before starting at Bolt in 2012 – said the mood is very different.

"At Greyhound, supervisors tend to micromanage you, which isn't good. If you have a problem, you often need to go higher to straighten it out. Over here, we can usually solve a problem just by talking with a supervisor."

Greyhound often tests new technology on Bolt drivers before rolling them out widely. Cervantes said she is now using an iPhone 6 loaded with software that lists passengers, scans tickets and tracks her departure and arrival times.

"They call it a Driver Support Device and I love it," she said.

## Shift...

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would be back that night or the next day. Now, I just tell them I'll be back at the end of the week."

Franklin belongs to a new generation of union activists. "That's an honor. I truly believe we can get to where we need to be as a union. We should all work together to improve what we can."

The main issue at the grass roots, he said, is being overworked and under-appreciated. "Union members know this is a tough job, but it's harder to get the job done when they don't get respect for the work they do."

ATU Local 1700 members will vote later this year for all Executive Board offices. Do we have your current address? Greyhound does not forward that information to the union. Contact your steward to ensure you receive election material.

Rubain is the latest in a long line of Greyhound drivers that ATU International has recognized as battle-tested leaders. He follows Bruce Hamilton, Natalie Cruz, Janice Borchardt, Ray Rivera, Chuck Flanagan and Gary Maurer. Ellis Franklin of Virginia led the Greyhound Drivers Council and retired as ATU Executive V.P.

## Do We Have Your Address?

**Greyhound does not notify the union when you move. We need your current address to send you material for the 2016 officer's election.**

## Are You Ready to Vote?

**You must re-register if you moved since the last election, even if you are still in the same city. We suggest you sign up to vote by mail.**



# Solidarity Road

ATU Local 1700  
Winter 2016

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# ATU 1700 Executive Board Shifts Gears

ATU International taps Sesil Rubain; Sammie Howard moves up to Treasurer spot; Dwayne Franklin takes wheel of Region 2.



Secil Rubain



Sammie Howard



Dwayne Franklin

A series of changes have underscored how Greyhound drivers remain among the leading voices of American transportation workers, and how a new generation of union activists is rising through the ranks of ATU Local 1700.

ATU President Larry Hanley started a chain reaction last year when he asked Local 1700 Financial Secretary-Treasurer Sesil Rubain to be an International representative. Maryland-based Rubain's first mission is serving as trustee of Local 1764 in the DC. area.

The Local 1700 Executive Board quickly agreed unanimously to appoint Region 2 Vice President Sammie Howard to complete Rubain's term as financial secretary-treasurer. Howard was Atlanta's Chief Steward when Bill White retired and named him head of Region 2 in 2012. Members elected him

the following year.

President Jimmie McCoy, in turn, appointed Charlotte Chief Steward Dwayne Franklin to serve out Howard's term as Region 2 V.P. Franklin was born in Brooklyn and raised in South Carolina. After leaving the Navy in 1996, he moved to North Carolina and began driving for Greyhound the next year. He has served as steward and chief steward for 13 years.

"Dwayne has always been active, always cared about people in the union, always been a fighter from his heart," Howard said.

Making the jump to vice president, Franklin said, was overwhelming at first and threw his household off balance. The 43-year-old and his wife have a 13-year-old son and two daughters, ages 4 and 2. "Before, my kids knew I

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