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Resolution in Support of Safety for SF School Children as They are Transported Home-to-School in Safe Vehicles by Qualified, Experienced, Unionized School Bus Drivers

Whereas, SF United School District (SFUSD) and the School Bus Contractor (First Student), in an effort to cut costs, are seeking solutions that significantly compromise the safety of children who depend on the school district to provide home-to-school transportation; and

Whereas, the San Francisco School Bus Drivers Union has been safely transporting the San Francisco's School Children for over 45 years in School Buses, under very challenging circumstances, in a very difficult city to navigate, and without one child fatality; and

Whereas, a Certificated California School Bus Driver requires among the highest safeguards of any commercial driving license in the state, and in addition to having a clean, Class B, commercial Driver's Licenses, with Passenger and special School Bus Endorsements, a Certified School Bus Driver (Driver) must get an additional, separate, certificate to drive a school bus, which includes at minimum:

- 20 hours of classroom training
- 20 hours of behind-the-wheel training
- Passing a written test with the California Highway Patrol.
- Passing an extensive drive test with the CHP officer evaluating your performance.

Whereas, to keep the School Bus Certificate valid, a Driver must repeat this testing every 5 years, be First Aid certified, and obtain a minimum of 10 hours of Safety Training every year; and

Whereas, the School Bus Driver's license, and certificate, are continually monitored and heavily scrutinized by the DMV, and other agencies, and can be pulled for infractions, moral turpitude, and health issues, or anything that might compromise the safety of children; and

Whereas, School Bus Drivers are subjected to random drug and alcohol tests, must pass physical dexterity tests, and must have, at minimum, biannual, comprehensive, physical examinations conducted by certified medical examiners to show they are fit to drive children; and



Whereas, California School Buses are some of the safest, and most regulated, vehicles on the road for transporting children and include many extra protections not found, or required, on other vehicles, using additional Federally Mandated Vehicle Safety Standards (FMVSS) including roll over protections, strict crush standards, well anchored seats, steel reinforced sides, and a Red-Light-Warning system which requires traffic to stop when loading and unloading children - these standards are not required for other buses, trucks and MPV's; and

Whereas, California State law mandates that school buses are maintained a minimum of every 45 days, inspected annually by CHP, and inspected daily by drivers before they leave the gate; and

Whereas, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration Website states "students are about 70 times more likely to get to school safely when taking a school bus instead of travelling by car"; and

Whereas, SFUSD began a pilot program with Zum (a ride-sharing app. similar to Uber & Lyft) to transport school children, which hires, underpaid, non-union, misclassified, independent contractors; and requires that these drivers use, and maintain, their own cars, and does not require any specialized commercial licensing; and SFUSD is also receiving bid inquires from similar companies to fulfill parts of the home- to-school busing contract utilizing vans instead of school buses.

Whereas, the Contractor is also being pressured by SFUSD to come up with their own solution to cut costs and is considering that school children be driven in vans instead of school buses, which do not meet the Federally Mandated Vehicle Safety Standards for school buses, and can be legally driven by anyone with non-commercial driver's license;

Whereas, there is a loophole in the law that allows other vehicles to take children to school if they have 9 passengers or less, and this loophole also does not mandate a certified school bus driver behind the wheel, and has not been used in this way by SFUSD until now;

Whereas, 90% of our Special Ed buses carry less than 9 children and could potentially all be replaced by non-conforming vans;

Whereas, SFUSD's recent transportation RFP is seeking bids for some home-to-school van transportation, it has stated that school bus certificates are not required for these vehicles and is unclear on whether they will even require a commercial driver's license with endorsements.

Whereas, SMART 1741 opposes lowering the standards of those who drive children home to school and stands against this unsafe compromising of safety standards;

Whereas, SFUSD's recent transportation RFP, is also seeking to potentially divide the transportation contract into three parts, with three potential companies providing home-to-school transportation services, and with the possibility that some of these workplaces may be non-union and/or not staffed by the experienced members of SMART 1741, and that this poses a serious risk to SMART 1741 and is not in the best interests of the children and the San Francisco community;

Therefore be it Resolved, that the San Francisco Labor Council supports Smart Local 1741 and its members in their fight for safety of our school children as they are driven home-to-school;

Therefore be it Further Resolved that the Labor Council supports drivers who have a School Bus Certificate and trained in vehicles that are FMVSS School Bus Certified;

Therefore be it Further Resolved that the San Francisco Labor Council will send a letter to First Student and SFUSD demanding safety for our school children, both with the vehicles used to transport them and the skills needed for safe passage by the drivers; and

Therefore be it Finally Resolved that the SF Labor Council will ask all of its affiliates to send letters to SFUSD as outlined above.

Adopted by the Executive Committee of the San Francisco Labor Council on October 7, 2019.