



On The Move

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BREAKING NEWS

The letter below is being sent to following political and law enforcement leaders: Josh Shapiro, Governor, Cherelle L. Parker, Mayor, Kevin Bethel, Philadelphia Police Commissioner, Charles Lawson, Transit Police Chief, Larry Krasner, Philadelphia District Attorney, Kenneth Lawrence, Jr., SEPTA Board Chairman

March 6, 2024

Re: Deterring Transit Crime

Dear Political and Law Enforcement Leaders:

Have we had enough yet?

On October 26, 2023, a passenger exited a Route 23 bus and shot Operator Bernard Gribbin's to death in broad daylight, a traumatizing event for the entire SEPTA workforce---but nothing has changed.

On March 4, 2024, at 3:45 p.m., students boarding the Route 6 bus were fired upon with a hail of bullets, killing a 17-year-old student and wounding multiple passengers on the vehicle as the bullets pierced the body of the bus, a traumatizing event for the entire SEPTA workforce and its riders.

On March 4, 2024, at the 15th Street Station on the Market-Frankford line, a station that should always have a law enforcement presence, a passenger was brazenly beaten by a group of youth.

On March 4, 2024, at Castor and Comly Avenues, at 11:20 p.m., two passengers got off the bus, and one shot the other to death, a traumatizing event for the entire SEPTA workforce and its riders.

On March 5, 2024, at Broad and Snyder, at 6:40 p.m., shots were fired on the Route 79 bus. Luckily no one was hit, yet another traumatizing event.

When is it going to stop? For at least the past two years, we have been advocating for local and state law enforcement action to establish a deterrent strong enough to stem the tide of crime on the SEPTA system. Everyone agrees there's a problem, but nothing has changed.

SEPTA has hired more transit police but even at full strength, the Transit Police cannot solve the problem, given its magnitude.

As part of their campaign against District Attorney Krasner, the Republicans in the state legislature managed to get a bill passed in the name of "transit security." The bill calls for a special prosecutor to reduce crime on the SEPTA system, but nothing has changed. There is no prosecutor, there's just a lawsuit and a divided transit coalition. And even if there were, prosecuting every transit crime will not solve the problem either. Prosecutions occur after the fact, and they rarely serve as a deterrent.

It's time for our political and law enforcement leadership to bring together state and local resources to provide a heightened law enforcement *presence* on the SEPTA system. Just today, the Governor of New York deployed the National Guard and State Police to patrol the NYC transit system. That's the only way we can hope to *deter crimes before they occur*, rather than having to deal with the tragic aftermath.

Brian Pollitt,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Brian Pollitt", written in a cursive style.

President, TWU Local 234

cc: Leslie Richards, SEPTA GM