

# Speak Out Now at BART (7/1/2024)

## That's BART

Did the scheduled track maintenance between MacArthur and 19<sup>th</sup> St. take BART HQ by surprise? It has been planned for a long time. Buses were ready at MacArthur and 19<sup>th</sup> St. for the bus bridges. Supervisors and managers were out there with their yellow vests. But confusion prevailed among many passengers.

In many stations passengers had a difficult time figuring out what was going on – especially if they kept their headphones on or earbuds in and didn't listen to announcements from Central. Those who tried to figure out what was happening got mixed messages. The announcement from Central said to transfer to the Yellow line at MacArthur and the electronic message signs said to transfer to a bus. But when they got there, the transfer was well organized.

Station Agents and Train Operators did their best to keep passengers updated about train arrivals, but who was listening? The breakdown in the tube Sunday afternoon didn't help either.

For those who ride regularly, it was no surprise. "That's BART" is the usual explanation.

Weekend passengers are not familiar with BART and or out-of-town travelers. They had no idea what to expect. The "organization" from the passengers' point of view did not reflect well on BART.



Are we supposed to believe that elections are going to solve the problems we are facing? This "debate" was a call for a real change – not by the likes of them, but by working people ourselves.

## Standing Together

Today, July 1, BART workers will see the 4% pay increase. Workers at MUNI in San Francisco just voted to accept 3-year contracts that include 13% to 15% wage increases over three years.

These raises are not enough to meet daily expenses. Almost no one can afford to live where they work. San Francisco used to be a working class city. Since 2014, housing costs have risen 67%. That means long and increasingly expensive commutes.

Workers who belong to unions are caught in the "wait and see" when contracts expire. Often it seems safer to roll the contract over, rather than risk a fight. And the rising cost of living eats away at our lives.

The BART contract expires next summer, the same time as the AC Transit contract. In 2013 it wasn't AC drivers who organized increased runs across the Bay. It's not too early to begin to build alliances with other workers and the passengers who rely on BART.

## Make Them Pay

Transit agencies throughout the Bay Area are facing a funding crisis. The operational costs of BART depend on fares, which is risky. And local and state budgets are being hit hard. Dependable public transportation is essential to the functioning of all urban areas, and to cut back on carbon emissions.

When it comes to waging wars, or subsidizing corporations, the money is there. More than 50,000 millionaires live in the Bay Area and L.A.. It's time for them to pay.

*A Speak Out Now Zoom Townhall*

## Forced Migration Crisis at the Border Saturday, July 20 at 4pm

Hundreds of thousands of people are being forced from their homelands by the economic, political, and environmental crises we all confront. They are criminalized by the system that has created these crises when they seek a new home here. Come to a zoom presentation and discussion by Justin Akers Chacón, activist and author.

Join us to watch and discuss together at the **South Berkeley Senior Center, 2939 Ellis St., Berkeley** (Suggested donation \$5)

Or join online at [TINYURL.COM/SON-TH](https://tinyurl.com/son-th)