

TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE REPORT relative to an assessment of bus driver safety concerns, safeguards implemented, and recommendations to protect the City's contract bus drivers and the transit riding public.

Recommendation for Council action, pursuant to Motion (Hutt – Park):

INSTRUCT the Los Angeles Department of Transportation, with the assistance of the Los Angeles Police Department, and City Attorney; and, REQUEST MV Transportation, and Teamsters Local 572, to report in 60 days with an assessment of bus driver safety concerns, safeguards implemented, and recommendations to protect the City's contract bus drivers and the transit riding public safe from harm, including estimated costs and implementation timelines, as well as a summary of steps that are being implemented by the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority to protect their bus drivers.

Fiscal Impact Statement: Neither the City Administrative Office nor the Chief Legislative Analyst has completed a financial analysis of this report.

Community Impact Statement: No

Summary:

On June 5, 2024, your Committee considered a Motion (Hutt – Park) relative to assessing bus driver safety concerns, safeguards implemented, and recommendations to protect the City's contract bus drivers and the transit riding public. According to the Motion, on Sunday, April 28, 2024, a video captured an unhoused woman attacking a female City DASH bus driver near the intersection of Central Avenue and Jefferson Boulevard. In the video, the driver can be heard telling the passenger to get out of the bus as the woman reaches over a protective barrier. Although the encounter did not appear to last more than a minute and the attacker was arrested, this situation underscores the increasingly common safety issues faced by commuters and bus drivers.

This event occurred just two days after a Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (Metro) bus drivers, staged a "sick out" protesting similar safety concerns. Recently, Metro declared a public safety emergency in response to several high-profile bus operator assaults. For example, a bus driver was hijacked by a person carrying an airsoft gun and another was stabbed as passengers watched. The recent fatal stabbing of a rider returning from her night shift on the Metro subway has spurred the Metro Board to consider facial recognition technology and fare gates to help prevent similar attacks.

Frontline transit workers across the county have been dealing with increasing hostility from unruly passengers. Federal data has demonstrated that between 2008 and 2022 the number of assaults nationwide resulting in deaths or medical transport rose from 168 to 492. Research from the Urban Institute has also shown that assaults on transit workers have tripled over the last 15 years. The violence inflicted on bus drivers is unacceptable

and the City should quickly move to respond to ensure that our bus drivers and passengers are safe on the transit system. After consideration and having provided an opportunity for public comment, the Committee moved to recommend approval of the Motion. This matter is now forwarded to the Council for its consideration.

Respectfully Submitted,
Transportation Committee

COUNCILMEMBER VOTE

HUTT:	YES
PARK:	YES
HERNANDEZ:	YES
DE LEON:	ABSENT
RAMAN:	ABSENT

ARL
6/5/24

-NOT OFFICIAL UNTIL COUNCIL ACTS-