



August 20th, 2019

The Canadian Federation of Student - Manitoba would like to express our continued support for the ATU 1505 during transit negotiations. We urge the city of Winnipeg to bargain in good faith with the ATU 1505 who provide a fundamental public service relied upon by thousands of Manitobans studying in Winnipeg every day.

In 2015 the Canadian Federation of Students - Manitoba, University of Winnipeg Students' Association and the University of Manitoba Student Union negotiated the significantly discounted U-PASS for full time undergraduate and graduate students at those campuses. This was based on the understanding that affordable and accessible mobility to-and-from campus is a key aspect of the broader mission to provide affordable and accessible post-secondary education for all. The city of Winnipeg's ramping up of bargaining tensions so close to the fall semester beginning puts in serious jeopardy the ability of students to pursue their increasingly expensive post-secondary education.

This increased burden in accessing education will be felt even more greatly by already under-served demographics of students who disproportionately rely on transit service. Students with disabilities, those from low-income backgrounds and/or those who are international students without access to a driver's license will be left stranded without access to Winnipeg Transit. Maintaining reliable and affordable transit is therefore a question of equity.

It is also key to connect this current labour-dispute to the funding changes our current provincial government imposed after taking office. By unilaterally ending the 50-50 transit funding deal between the Province of Manitoba and the City of Winnipeg, our provincial government even further financially restrained an already chronically under-funded transit system.

It's long been apparent to anyone who actually rides Winnipeg Transit just how many challenges and indignities bus operators face daily while trying to do their important work. Manitoba students see this labour dispute for what it is: another symptom of government cuts to our basic services and the shouldering of that burden by public service workers, students and the most marginalized members of our communities.

In Solidarity,

Brenden Gali, Chairperson  
Canadian Federation of Students - Manitoba