

## **Climate Change Committee Report**

Mr. Chairman, this is the report of the Climate Change Committee.

Officers and Delegates of the 58<sup>th</sup> Convention of the Amalgamated Transit Union: We, your Committee on Climate Change, submit the following for your consideration and approval.

The committee met and reviewed information linking climate change and public transportation use. With transit ridership in North America now at more than 12 billion trips per year, the transit sector plays a pivotal role in fighting climate change. Transit can reduce greenhouse gas emissions by providing a low emissions alternative to driving, facilitating compact development, and minimizing the carbon footprint of its operations. As urban populations spike, members of the millennial generation are discovering that they prefer to get around a city by public transportation. As the largest labor union representing transit workers in North America, ATU can play a huge role in advocating for more sustainable transit – saving our jobs and our planet at the same time.

The committee, which will hopefully continue its work after this convention, gave ample consideration and full discussion to Resolution M, which was referred to us by the Resolutions Committee. As noted below, we've made a few additions to the resolution.

### **RESOLUTION M**

*Submitted by Amalgamated Transit Union*

#### **OPPOSING FOSSIL FUEL DEPENDENCY**

**WHEREAS**, ATU members have spent a century providing the most environmentally-sustainable methods of transportation and have partnered with Sierra Club, the Blue-Green Alliance, and other environmental allies to combat climate change and pollution; and

**WHEREAS**, a single person switching from a private automobile to public transit cuts annual carbon emissions by more than 4,800 pounds; and

*Whereas, defending, improving and expanding public transit is key to reducing emissions -- if public transit were expanded to twice its size, GHG emissions per capita would decrease by 60% --; and*

*Whereas, investment in public transit creates more jobs per million dollars spent than any other green economy sector; and*

*Whereas, if 50% of highway funds were shifted to transit, it would generate one million new transit jobs; and*

**WHEREAS**, climate change is already wreaking havoc on coastal and inland communities, causing billions of dollars in damage to transit systems; and

**WHEREAS**, there is global scientific consensus that continued use of fossil fuels will only exacerbate the violent impact of climate change; and

**WHEREAS**, the victims most harmed by climate change are those already suffering from deindustrialization, overdevelopment, and unemployment, including working class families in large cities and farmers, ranchers, and Native Americans in rural areas; and

**WHEREAS**, extreme efforts to extract oil and gas are contaminating water supplies in Pennsylvania, contributing to cancer spikes in Alberta, and spilling toxic fuel from Arkansas to Michigan;

**WHEREAS**, the jobs and income created by projects like the Keystone XL pipeline or widespread fracking are a fraction of those that could be created by investing in building and repairing transit systems, water infrastructure, or upgrading our power grid;

*Therefore, be it resolved, that the ATU shall encourage Congress and Parliament to invest heavily in public transit infrastructure and renewable energy development to create good union jobs that contribute to the fight against climate change, and*

*Further, be it resolved, that ATU shall encourage all members to avail themselves of training in transit advocacy as a key weapon in our fight for climate protection.*

**THE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDS CONCURRENCE WITH THIS PROPOSAL, AS AMENDED, AND I SO MOVE, MR. CHAIRMAN.**

***MR. CHAIRMAN, THAT CONCLUDES THE REPORT OF THE CLIMATE CHANGE COMMITTEE. ON BEHALF OF ALL THE MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE, WE COMMEND ATU FOR STANDING WITH THE PROGRESSIVE COMMUNITY IN CREATING THIS NEW COMMITTEE. THE LABOR MOVEMENT, AND OUR UNION ESPECIALLY, CAN PLAY AN IMPORTANT ROLE IN THE FIGHT AGAINST CLIMATE CHANGE. WE LOOK FORWARD TO CONTINUING THIS IMPORTANT WORK IN THE YEARS AHEAD.***

***THANK YOU VERY MUCH!***