



"We Move America"

# Transport Workers Union of America, AFL-CIO

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October 24, 2014

To: All TWU Local Presidents and TWU International Staff

RE: TWU Coordination of Continued Safety & Preparedness Efforts in Response to Ebola Virus Threat

On Thursday, TWU International President Harry Lombardo convened a summit meeting of International officers, Local leadership, and safety representatives from across the union's Divisions in order to coordinate a unified strategy for dissemination of critical safety and preparedness information to all TWU members whose work puts them at increased risk of exposure to the Ebola virus.

Over the course of the past weeks, TWU International leadership and representatives have been working very closely with the AFL-CIO to obtain and communicate to Local elected officers the most up-to-date and accurate health and safety information available from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), and the New York Committee for Occupational Safety and Health (NYCOSH), among other sources.

Peg Seminario, AFL-CIO Director of Occupational Safety and Health, and Rebecca Reindel, AFL-CIO Senior Safety and Health Specialist, attended Thursday's meeting as expert authorities, helping to inform TWU leadership's discussion of next steps and concrete safety recommendations. These recommendations will be presented in ongoing meetings with employers and elected officials.

Moving forward, TWU elected officers and representatives will continue to work with allied transportation unions as well as the broader labor community, expert authorities, employers, and federal bodies including the Federal Aviation Administration and Department of Transportation, to ensure that members are operating under the safest possible conditions on the job.

During the meeting, International leadership solicited first-hand reports from the field on how employers are responding to the health threat presented by presence of the Ebola virus. It was evident from the discussion that many employers are failing to provide adequate worker training, informational communications, and avenues for addressing member concerns.

Across all TWU Divisions, our members are on the frontlines, constantly interacting with and serving the public. In the airline industry, our flight attendants, aircraft maintenance, ramp personnel, cabin cleaners, and many other titles are at risk of exposure. The same is true for members working for public and private transit systems, and for our table games dealers in the Gaming Division.

Protecting members' health and safety is TWU's number one priority. However, it is important to recognize that elevated safety standards and robust preparedness training are also essential protections for the public. Transit systems are fluid — when a member of the public steps off an aircraft, they often step right onto a subway or a bus.

The union is calling for increased vigilance and precaution not only to protect TWU members in the line of duty but also in solidarity with our riders — the hundreds of millions of Americans who take advantage of a range of transportation systems across the country every single day.

TWU's leadership summit meeting resulted in the selection of point people from each Division to act as the first point of contact in disseminating information among the Locals, in order to facilitate effective and consistent communications with the membership. This rapid response team will ensure that there is continual sharing of informational resources across the TWU.

In confronting a global health crisis, it is important to acknowledge that the situation is in constant flux. As the International receives new information concerning not only the Ebola virus but other possible threats to the health and safety of TWU members, we will continue to update Local leadership through all available means of communication.

In Solidarity,

Harry Lombardo, International President  
John Samuelsen, International Executive Vice President  
Alex Garcia, International Secretary-Treasurer  
John Bland, Administrative Vice President  
Gary E. Maslanka, Administrative Vice President

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