

Resolution # 10

Advancing Safety in Our Transportation Workplaces

WHEREAS, Transport Workers work in dangerous environments where there is a wide range of risks to their health and safety. Since our last convention, many workers have been injured in workplace accidents, and three members were killed: Local 100 Trackworker Hilarion Joseph was fatally struck by a subway train in New York City, Local 234 Bus Operator Bernard Gribbin was shot and killed by an unhinged rider in Philadelphia, and Local 513 Fleet Service Agent Michal Ingraham died in a ramp accident in Austin, Texas. Furthermore, assaults against front-line transit workers, gate agents, and flight attendants continue to happen all too frequently; and

WHEREAS, the TWU has strongly lobbied in Washington, D.C., and state legislatures for laws and regulations that will better protect our members on the job. International and local union leaders have also vigorously fought for safety improvements during collective bargaining. As a result, the TWU has fought and won new protections against assaults for our members, but there is still much work to do; and

WHEREAS, anyone who attacks a Flight Attendant, Gate Agent, or other airline worker now faces significantly increased financial penalties. Airlines have been directed to enhance basic security training for Flight Attendants and to inform passengers during pre-flight briefings that assaulting a crew member is a federal crime; and

WHEREAS, at the TWU's urging, the 2021 Infrastructure Bill established joint Labor-Management Safety Committees at public transportation agencies. Unions now have an equal number of seats on these committees as management. Locals now have a powerful tool to develop new safety initiatives. They also have the power to veto plans they consider inadequate; and

WHEREAS, the Federal Transit Administration implemented its first-ever rule, granting workers the right to refuse unsafe work on transit rail tracks. This rule reflects language TWU Local 100 negotiated years ago in its contract. The TWU has turned a contractual victory of one Local into a nationwide standard; and

WHEREAS, we are very proud that the contract battle in Philadelphia, waged by Local 234 and the International, secured a commitment by SEPTA to install bulletproof compartments for Bus Operators. After contract ratification, TWU

International President Samuelsen invited TWU local leaders from across the country to a ballistic demonstration, so they could begin informed discussions with their agencies about following Philadelphia's lead; and

WHEREAS, the derailment disaster in East Palestine, Ohio, highlights the hazards faced by railroad workers every day. The TWU worked with the U.S. Department of Transportation on a final rule that would require at least two people operating every freight train – an essential safety measure that improves working conditions both on the tracks and in rail yards; and

WHEREAS, our Railroad Division staff is pushing for an FRA rule change to mandate that only Qualified Carmen inspect rail cars. Much work has been done, but obviously, the job is never done.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED: the delegates gathered here at the TWU's 27th Constitutional Convention support International's efforts to increase member safety across the Air, Rail, and Transit Divisions, and will actively promote membership participation in TWU efforts to achieve safety-specific goals; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED: The TWU will continue to fight for legislation, regulations, and contract provisions to improve worker safety.