

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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ATU Canada has been following the events of ATU Local 615, Saskatoon, during the work stoppage created as a result of City Council locking out a great group of willing and dedicated transit workers. Elected City Councillors have attempted to create an atmosphere of urgency and anarchy that has absolutely no merit. They have stripped the citizens of Saskatoon of a service they committed to provide to them when they asked for their support during the last election.

“Less than 37% of the electorate voted in the 2012 municipal election. I think City Council will have motivated the working poor to go to the polls in droves for the next election,” said Mike Mahar, ATU Canadian Council Director.

ATU Canada is extremely confident that when the dust settles, the Labour Board will denounce City Councils labour practices as unfair and a breach of the Labour Code itself. We are equally confident that when the Pension Plan trustees file a current evaluation of the plan, the victims (citizens of Saskatoon) of City Council’s lockout will be livid that City Council has either been lied to by Administration or have themselves fabricated lies.

Local 615 and the citizens of Saskatoon are being denied a service that the city’s most vulnerable depend on.

“I have to wonder,” stated Mahar, “if this was a strike that denied equally necessary services to business, say withdrawing electrical services to a fish hatchery, would the Labour Board allow a legal strike?”

This lockout is part of a troubling trend in Canadian communities—there have been three transit lockouts in the last few years, most recently in August, 2014, when Guelph Transit workers were locked out for two weeks.

“The trend is worrisome. It suggests that municipalities are no longer willing to negotiate in good faith with workers,” explained Mahar.

“The ridership ultimately suffers; the City strips them of their ability to get to work, to go to school and to get to medical appointments.”

*Mike Mahar is the Canadian Director of the Amalgamated Transit Union Canadian Council (ATU Canada). ATU Canada represents working women and men in the bus industry from British Columbia to Newfoundland. Mr. Mahar can be reached at 416-679-8846 or 416-476-8350*