



Rail, Tram and Bus Union

MEDIA RELEASE

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NSW Govt ploughs ahead with bus privatisation under cover of COVID-19

Bus stops to close; services to cut; jobs at risk

The NSW Government's announcement today that it is ploughing ahead with its privatisation plans for Sydney's buses is a slap in the face for commuters and frontline transport workers who have been putting themselves – and their families – in harm's way during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The NSW Government today announced the tender process for buses in regions 7, 8 and 9 – the last remaining state-owned bus services. The regions cover the areas such as the Northern Beaches, Eastern Suburbs and Ryde/Willoughby areas.

Tram and Bus Division Secretary of the Rail, Tram and Bus Union (RTBU), David Babineau, said the privatisation of our bus services will mean commuters would be faced with cuts to their local bus services and transport workers will face attacks to their jobs.

"This is an outrageous attack on frontline workers and commuters," Mr Babineau said. "Unless this decision is reversed, commuters are going to emerge from the darkness of the coronavirus pandemic to find their local bus services and stops are on the chopping block."

"Privatising our bus services is a terrible idea at the best of times. To do it under the cover of the current global pandemic is disgraceful."

"This isn't over yet. We will continue to fight this until the paperwork is signed, which is a long way off yet."

"The Premier and Transport Minister have been at pains to stress what a fantastic job our frontline workers, like bus drivers, have been doing lately under the pressure of the COVID-19 crisis, yet here they are actively taking steps to attack their jobs."

"For the Premier to do this to workers and commuters in her own electorate and across Sydney is disgraceful."

"These workers have been putting themselves and their families in harm's way in order to keep Sydney moving. Now, they're finding out that as thanks for all their hard work, the NSW Government is attacking their jobs and the services our commuter rely upon."

"The NSW Government will attempt to spin this by saying using words like 'franchising' and claims that measures have been put in place to protect jobs. That's absolute rubbish. Jobs are at risk and services will be cut. We've seen it in the inner-west and in Newcastle where this government has already pushed through its unpopular and unsuccessful privatisation plans."

"The Premier needs to step in and reverse this decision immediately."

RTBU NSW Tram and Bus Division Secretary, David Babineau, is available for comment today

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