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A key factor in your wages and benefits Seniority Language is a Significant “Perk” In all Local 1277 Contracts, at all Properties

By Douglas Kurowski, - Executive Board Member at Large

When it comes to thinking about seniority, brothers and sisters—and at some point, we all do, believe me—here are some catchy words to help you remember how important it is.

You're sitting on top of the world, looking down if you got it, and if you don't, more often than not, you feel threatened by those who do, and you feel like you're at the bottom looking up.

Every property represented by ATU Local 1277 has some type of seniority language included in the Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) or Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). **This is important because your seniority on the job plays an instrumental role in determining your pay, vacation allotment and when you can take it, medical coverage, and pension and benefit-level benchmarks.**

The fact of the matter is, at some point in time, *you all will have the seniority needed, to provide the security you want, in the position you hold.* Seniority will come to those who stick around long enough on the job to acquire it. **Longevity is the key.**

At MTA, for example, seniority varies from division to division and from bus to rail. For example, in one division you may find a day-shift position with split weekends off after *10 to 15 years* of service. In another Division it may take *20 to 25 years* to find a similar day-shift position.

Our CBA with MTA has specific language with respect to seniority:

Article 15 - Seniority

Section A - Scope:

“Seniority, within the meaning of this Agreement, may be either Authority Seniority or ATU Seniority.”

Section B - Authority Seniority:

“There shall be an Authority Seniority list established in accordance with the original date of the last employment by the Authority or its predecessor.”

Section C - ATU Seniority

“There shall be an ATU Seniority List established in accordance with the date of commencing service in an ATU-represented classification.”

“For the purpose of bidding shifts, vacation and holidays, ATU Seniority shall control. The Authority will post ATU Seniority Lists at the time of shake-up and will provide the Union with a copy of each list.”

Section D - Departments

“For the purpose of this agreement, there shall be three departments:

- Equipment Maintenance
- Facilities Maintenance
- Stops and Zones”

Section E - Position For Those Hired The Same Day

“When more than one new employee begins working in an ATU-represented classification on the same day, ATU Seniority will be determined by the order in which they passed their physical examinations. In the event that the record of physical examination does *not* determine date and time such physical was made, the order of position on the seniority list for that date will be in alphabetical order.”

Section F - Blending

“If work is transferred to or integrated with work in another department or division, employees may follow the work by seniority choice and will have ATU seniority blended with seniority in the department or division to which the work is transferred. The number of employees permitted to transfer will be the number required to perform the additional work in the department after the transfer or integration is completed.”

Section G - Promotions

“Any employee promoted into another classification which is covered by this agreement shall serve a one hundred and twenty (120) day trial period. At any time during this period, the employee may return or be returned to his/her former classification and position/division. This provision does *not* apply to promotion within the following classifications: Mechanic (C to B or B to A); Property Maintainer (C to B or B to A), and Laborer (B to A). In addition, this provision does *not* apply to an employee who is promoted into a new classification after successfully completing an Authority-approved training program.”

“Any employee covered by the terms of this agreement who is promoted to a position not included within the scope of this agreement shall, within one hundred eighty (180) days of such promotion, determine if he/she shall continue on such promotion or return to his/her previous job. In the event that the member has continued his/her membership in good standing in the Union, he/she shall be permitted to return to his/her former position without the loss of ATU seniority. An employee who elects to remain in such a new position or fails to continue his/her membership in good standing shall forfeit all ATU seniority. Provided further, that any employee who is promoted a second time will immediately forfeit all ATU seniority.”

See *Side Letter #2000-02* regarding the creation of Promotion Review Panel.

Similar provisions concerning seniority and its benefits are included in the Riverside, SunLine and Long Beach Transit contracts. Please review your copy of the agreement or ask your Shop Steward for a copy. If you have any questions about seniority as it applies to your worksite, do not hesitate to ask your Shop Steward or a Union officer for help.

So, brothers and sisters, whether you work at an MTA division or rail location—or at *any* of our properties—please accept those transferring in with open arms. Be willing to bring them up to speed concerning your department’s safety, work procedures and product. They are your fellow workers, and they may probably be nervous about their new responsibilities and job requirements as well. ***And keep piling up your seniority!***

PRESIDENT’S REPORT

Legislation to Increase Size of MTA Board Is a Political and Policy Boondoggle!

By Art Aguilar - President, Local 1277

Sometimes, brothers and sisters, the politicians just can’t leave well enough alone! For years, ever since its beginning in the early 1990s, MTA’s Board of Directors has consisted of *13* members, some representing the mass-transit-dependent riders from the City of Los Angeles, others representing the same kind of people from surrounding areas. The 13-member board has, generally, functioned well.

But, no, some politicians can’t be satisfied with a well-run board! A proposed bill in Sacramento, SB 268 (Mendoza), would unnecessarily expand the membership of the MTA Board of Directors from *13* to *21*. This bill, while superficially sounding like more-inclusive legislation, would negatively impact and degrade the deliberations and decision-making process of this very important board. For example,

- Reducing the number of Los Angeles County Supervisors from five to *two* is counterproductive. MTA is a *regional* mass-transit authority, serving millions of people throughout Southern California. Every county supervisor’s district is impacted by mass transit and full of people who rely on it every day. This is one of the most important issues each supervisor faces, and to remove their experience, judgement and hands-on concern from the Board’s deliberations and decisions removes the representatives who are intimately involved with mass transit and how it affects their constituents.

- Removing two *public* members from the Board is unnecessary and counterproductive. Who is better attuned to the everyday needs and problems of the average person or family who relies on mass transit for so many things,

from commuting to work to carrying out a myriad of errands and appointments? MTA is a *public* agency, dealing with a dependent *public’s* demands, needs and priorities for reliable mass transit; removing public members from the Board is a complete contradiction.

- Currently, the mayor of Los Angeles can appoint two L.A. City Councilmembers to the Board. Given the fact that the mayor already appoints three members, he or she in effect “controls” four votes on the 13-member Board. To add *another* three L.A. City Councilmembers would I believe, give the city too much influence on the Board, risking a situation in which Los Angeles City appointees could override the needs and concerns of cities and areas outside of L.A., possibly to the detriment of their riders. Again, as noted above, MTA is a *regional* entity, responsible to mass-transit-dependent riders throughout Southern California; it cannot—nor should not—be overwhelmed by the City of Los Angeles.

For these reasons, and simply to avoid adding additional bureaucracy and voices which will only slow down and further politicize the Board’s deliberations and decision-making process, ***ATU Local 1277 strongly opposes SB 268 and urges all pro-union, pro-working legislators to reject this needless expansion of the MTA Board.*** Adding more voting Board members will increase the political noise and slow the implementation of important, much-needed policies.

SB 268 is, simply, bad policy and politics, and detrimental to the needs of the mass-transit-dependent public we serve day in and day out!

Get Involved—What You Can Do

This misguided bill is now heading to the State Assembly Transportation Committee for consideration and a vote. Four

Here are the upcoming Local 1277 membership meetings for June. Please make every attempt to attend the meeting for your unit. It's your Union, and we need your participation at our meetings!

Tuesday, June 6:	Los Angeles area members: L.A. Building Trades Council, 1626 Beverly Blvd., Los Angeles. Morning Session 10:00 a.m. Evening Session 5:00 p.m.
Wednesday, June 7:	Riverside area members: 1074 E. La Cadena Dr., Riverside Morning Session 10:00 a.m. Afternoon Session 2:00 p.m. Evening Session 6:00 p.m.
Thursday, June 8:	Palm Springs/SunLine members: Cathedral City Branch Library, 33520 Date Palm Drive, Cathedral City Morning Session 10:00 a.m. Afternoon Session 4:00 p.m.
Thursday, June 8:	Long Beach: Machinist Hall, 319 W. Broadway, Long Beach Morning Session 10:00 a.m. Afternoon Session 3:00 p.m.

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of its members—all Democrats—represent districts in which Local 1277 members (active and retired) and families live. ***I ask every concerned union member to contact these members if you are in their districts and ask them to vote AGAINST SB 268. Passage of this bill will just complicate our dealings and negotiations with MTA.***

You can call or fax these assembly members, and when you do, be sure to tell them that you are a concerned, voting union member of ATU Local 1277, and that *SB 268 is bad for our Union and harmful to the best interests of the mass-transit-dependent public.*

Adrin Nazarian, 46th District, San Fernando Valley and Burbank. Phone: 916/319-2046, Fax: 916/319-2146.

Raul Bocanegra, 39th District, Western San Fernando Valley. Phone: 916/319-2039, Fax: 916/319-2139

Jose Medina, 61st District, Riverside, Moreno Valley. Phone: 916/319-2061, Fax: 916/319-2161.

Laura Friedman, Burbank, Glendale. Phone: 916/319-2043, Fax: 916/319-2143.

SB 268 is pointless, unneeded legislation. Please join your Executive Board in contacting these assembly members and urging them to vote **NO** on it. And please ask your friends and neighbors in these districts to join your effort. *Thank you.*

We marched to affirm these basic family and human rights, and to let the Trump administration know that we are part of the “California Resistance”. We are determined to put our region and state in the forefront of the fight to protect everything that is worthy in our society from the grubby, dirty hands of those who are bent on destroying everything we hold dear.

Day after day, we see the Trump crowd *attacking and trying to destroy* those things that make our country great: Healthcare; worker protections; clean rivers and open spaces; tolerance towards all people; good education, and basic human dignity. This will be a long and very tough fight, brothers and sisters, but one that we simply cannot shy away from or ignore. *It's our future at stake here—individually, and as family and union members.*

ATU Local 1277 Lends a Hand

I am proud to acknowledge the brothers and sisters from our Union who took the time and felt the need to join the May Day March. From Division 5: **Jose Reyes; Joe Patin,** and **George Moncrease.** From Division 8: **Franky Molina.** From CMF: **Edwin Alcaraz.** From Facilities: **Rick Anzures.** From Division 13: **Armando Urena; Alicia Linares,** and **Jesse Flores.** From Red Line: **Juan Rey; Elliot Brown,** and **Julio Correa.** From our Union: Executive Board Member-at-Large **Doug Kurowski;** Administrative Assistant **Cristina Soto,** and myself.

Congratulations to each and every marcher, union member or not, for keeping up the good fight!

Seven Local 1277 Members Retire from Careers at MTA

Seven Local 1277 members have retired from MTA after long and productive careers. They all were hardworking employees and loyal members of our Union.

Paul Tassone, Property Maintainer A, CMF, 44 years, March 9, 2017; Sergey Lokot, Electrician, Facility Maintenance, 25 years, March 12; Gary Ross, Maintenance Specialist, Red Line, 25 years, March 21; Enrique Arias, Mechanic A, Division 15, 26 years, March 28; Salim Karim, Service Attendant, Division 9, 35 years, April 4; Ramon Gutierrez, Property Maintainer A, Stops and Zones, 35 years, April 16, and Fred Wenzel: Machinist, CMF, 24 years, April 24.

Local 1277's Executive Board and members wish these brothers and sisters long, enjoyable and healthy retirements. They will be missed!

Marching for all the right reasons...

Local 1277 Members Join Thousands In May Day March for People's Rights and Dignity

By Adolfo Soto - Financial-Recording Secretary

As the dreary, anti-working people and families Trump administration grinds on, thousands of people from the greater Los Angeles region—spearheaded by proud and concerned unions—marched on May Day, May 1, to show their support for basic human rights and dignity, and to demonstrate their hostility to the gang in Washington, D.C. that has hijacked both our government and standards of common decency.



Throughout this inspiring and peaceful march, rank-and-file people chanting and waving signs, made their priorities crystal clear: *Adequate and affordable healthcare for everyone; an environment in which we can all live and breathe safely; union strength to preserve worksite safety and productivity; compassion, understanding and help for immigrants, and freedom of expression and thought.*



These ATU Local 1277 brothers certainly have the right idea!



Union activists and other concerned brothers and sisters rally in front of City Hall to protest Trump anti-working family policies, and call for resistance to his regime.

Fifteen Local 1277 Members Contribute to Vital ATU COPE Fund

Fifteen members of our Union have generously contributed to the important ATU COPE Fund. As you know, our International Union amasses this war chest in order to support our political friends and causes, and fight the enemies of working people and families. We are proud to present Union pins and jackets to those members who have realized how vital the ATU COPE Fund is for expanding labor's influence in Congress and advancing our agenda.

Jose Muratalla Rodriguez; Jessica Leyva; Jose Reyes; Joel Carrillo; Daniel Tobin; Jose Aguirre; Arnoldo Del Toro; Fred Dickinson; Kenneth McGee; Vernell Duhon; Patrick Michaels; Lars Villumsen; Charles Blight; Peter Alegria, and Garcell Bullocks.

To earn a jacket, one must contribute \$12.50/month, for a total of \$150.00/year. Congratulations to those members for their public-spirited and timely action. The ATU COPE Fund is very important. Please contribute whatever you can to it! Thank you.