

**MTA Welcomes Governor’s Appointment of Fact-Finding Board in Labor Negotiations**

(June 30) Gov. Gray Davis moved late Thursday to appoint a fact-finding board to assess the state of labor negotiations between the MTA and its unions. The action is the first step in a process established by the state’s Lockyer legislation, which includes provisions for a 60-day “cooling off” period.

Contracts between the MTA and the UTU, ATU and TCU expire at midnight, Friday, June 30. The MTA issued the following statement to the media late Thursday:

**MTA STATEMENT:**  
**Gov. Davis’ Intervention in MTA Labor Talks**

The MTA welcomes the appointment of a board of investigation by Governor Gray Davis that will prevent interruption of Metro Bus and Metro Rail service for at least seven days. The board will have one week to review the issues surrounding MTA labor contract negotiations and the current status of those talks, then report back to the Governor.

Based on the board’s report, the Governor will then decide whether or not to seek a full 60-day cooling off period, as permitted under state law, to allow bargaining to continue. During those two months, MTA labor unions could not strike. Their current contracts, which expire at midnight Friday, June 30, would be extended without disruption in Metro Bus or Metro Rail service.

The MTA is hopeful that it can reach new contract agreements with its major labor unions, representing bus and rail operators, mechanics and clerks and avert a work stoppage this summer.

MTA is committed to working with its labor unions to develop mutually agreed solutions to all significant problems. These include rising workers compensation costs, lost time and absenteeism, and customer scheduling and service issues. Combined, these problems cause MTA to have the highest operating costs of any public transit company in the region.

The MTA’s goals in these labor negotiations are to ensure a qualified and experienced workforce is in place; provide more and better customer service; operate more competitively and efficiently; and use public funds wisely. The MTA believes that these benefits can be achieved through meaningful negotiations without layoffs, with reasonable increases in wages and while maintaining equivalent employee benefits.

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