

TRANSPORT WORKERS UNION OF AMERICA

LOCAL 250-A AFL-CIO

1508 FILLMORE STREET, SUITE 211 • SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94115
TEL: (415) 922-9495 • FAX: (415) 922-9416



NEWS RELEASE

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Contact: Jamie Horwitz,
202/549-4921
media@twu.org

Transit Workers Applaud Ruling That Prop G Violates California Labor Law; Sweeping Decision Rescinds Ordinance, Affirms Workplace Rights

San Francisco – Members of Transport Workers Union (TWU) Local 250-A today applauded a ruling by California Administrative Law Judge Donn Ginoza, which finds that Proposition G, a controversial ballot measure designed to restrict the rights of transit workers, violates California labor law.

“This ruling confirms what our members have said from the very beginning,” said TWU Local 250-A President Eric Williams. “The best way to keep Muni running safely, on time and on budget is to give our members a voice, bargain fair contracts and respect workers’ rights.”

The sweeping ruling, issued Thursday by Judge Ginoza of the California Public Employment Relations Board (PERB), orders the City of San Francisco to “cease and desist from adopting and enforcing” labor regulations found to be “unreasonable” as applied to transit workers; to rescind certain provisions of the City Charter enacted by Proposition G; and to “cease and desist” interference with “the right of employees to participate in a labor organization of their own choosing.”

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Proposition G, enacted by voters in 2010, changed the way collective bargaining had been done for decades for San Francisco transit workers, putting in danger collectively bargained labor agreements, work practices and procedures for arbitrating disputes between labor and management, which had resulted in a long history of stable labor relations for workers and management at San Francisco's public transit system.

"This is a common sense decision which affirms that municipalities cannot unilaterally ignore state law," said attorney Ken Absalom, who represented TWU Local 250-A in seeking to overturn Proposition G. "California law requires a level playing field between labor and management, so workers can exercise their rights. Union members were especially concerned that the onerous arbitration provisions of Prop G made it difficult for transit workers to exercise their voice about safety on the job and other critical issues. It's good news for all parties concerned that these provisions have been overturned."

"Our members took a lot of heat for speaking their minds on this issue," said Local 250-A President Williams. "I'm personally grateful to each and every transit worker who had the courage to stand up for our rights on the job – and for safe, accessible transit for all our citizens."

City officials have 20 days to appeal Ginoza's ruling to the California PERB. The U.S. Department of Labor, however, has also raised questions about whether Prop G is compatible with federal law.

The Transport Workers Union of America (TWU) represents 200,000 workers and retirees, primarily in commercial aviation, public transportation and passenger railroads, including more than 2,000 workers at SFMTA. The union is an affiliate of the AFL-CIO.

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