



The Change We Need... The Strength to Lead

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

BARROW ENDORSED BY DETROIT BUS DRIVERS UNION

Amalgamated Transit Union Backs Mayoral Challenger

Against "Cut & Hide" Interim Mayor Bing

DETROIT. September 2, 2009 --- Bus drivers fighting to keep their jobs and Sunday bus service today have taken on an ally in mayoral challenger Tom Barrow as they endorsed his candidacy for Mayor of Detroit.

Surrounded by union members and supporters in downtown Detroit, Barrow stepped off of a city bus upon his arrival to emphasize his solidarity with the union membership.

"Barrow is a Detroiter who would never think to strand his neighbors without bus service," said Hank Gaffney, president of Local 26 of the Amalgamated Transit Union. "He has lived here all of his life and career and he knows the city needs strong leadership to work with the unions as partners in growing Detroit back to its glory."

ATU represents hundreds of city bus drivers and mechanics. So far, 113 of its members have received layoff notices but were given until October to keep their jobs after city officials purportedly found \$400,000 in funds which will cover salaries until then.

Barrow, pointed out that the city's financial managers have been untrustworthy with the public in regard to the true state of the city's finances. He has called for the resignations of Charles Beckham and Norm White, the city's chief operating and chief financial officers respectively.

"In accepting this important endorsement, I must promise the kind of transparency that allows us to negotiate with facts and not all-of-the-sudden conjure up money magically while crying broke," declared Barrow, 60, "The entire city was threatened to its core with sub-standard bus service and the loss of hundreds of jobs when the City leaders knew all along they had funds to keep our buses moving. This is shameful stewardship of this city."

ATU has already partnered with Barrow's campaign with protests at several hearings presented by DDOT on cutting bus service, campaigning on buses and at bus stops, and speaking to union members at small gatherings at their homes.

Gaffney stated, "Our next mayor will open the city's books so that all stakeholders, the public, media and unions know the true state of the city's finances so that we are all working together, and we are endorsing an expert accountant to oversee that process."

Gaffney joined in Barrow's call for chief operating officer Charles Beckham and chief financial officer Norm White to resign immediately.

"No other city would keep the two key individuals who presided over this financial mess and expect them to fix their own disaster while working for a Mayor who cuts services and then hides from the public," added Gaffney. "We want to tell every Detroiter that the choice is clear, Tom Barrow for Mayor.

#

MEDIA CONTACT: Colleen Robar, 313-207-5960, crobar231@aol.com