A Message to Our Union Team Members in Jackson, MS

We want to speak to our union team members about where things stand and what is at stake.

First, let us be clear: **we want to pay you more.**

Months ago, MV proposed wage increases that were higher than what was originally requested by the union leadership in several key areas, including higher starting wages and higher wages for mechanics.

Our proposal created a path for most team members to receive wage increases of approximately **$3 to $5 per hour ($6,000 - $10,000 per year), a huge increase.**

The proposal had two important parts:

- A collective bargaining agreement that provided for significant wage increases combined with the same safety policies MV uses successfully, including with many ATU-represented divisions, for the benefit of passengers and employees across the country
- A service redesign that would address the City's budget crisis while freeing up some funds to support the significant wage increases.

MV was prepared to move forward with both parts by March 1. Had we succeeded, the average MV employee would have made $2,000 more than they did since March 1. But, due to delays in the negotiating process and now a failure to reach agreement, none of that is happening, which we find very disappointing and frustrating.
Instead, we are left with the much smaller 4% wage increases that are funded through the current contract with the City of Jackson.

Throughout these several months of negotiations, MV has continued to seek solutions, including proposing these significant wage increases and suggesting mediation assistance to try to resolve our differences, which was refused by union negotiators for reasons that are unclear. In contrast, the union has not engaged constructively on most issues and has not presented a single solution to pay for its demands. In MV's proposal, all of it was paid for, consistent with the budget constraints of the City of Jackson.

The challenge we face now is simple: right now we have neither the collective bargaining agreement we need nor approval of the service redesign necessary to fund larger wage increases.

We think there are three potential paths forward:

1) Agree on MV's significant proposed wage increases and MV's standard safety policies – in place at dozens of locations across the country, including many represented by the ATU – and work together with the city for a transit redesign that will fund the proposed wage increases. If we get all of that done, instead of the currently proposed 4% wage increases, wage increases for most people would be $3 to $5 per hour – a huge increase amounting to $6,000 to $10,000 per year.

2) Work on a different solution that works for the City's budget problems, our passengers and all of our MV teammates. While we think Option #1 is the best path to achieve that, we have always been open to other solutions that can solve the problems.
3) Stop working on any solutions and engage in a standoff, or worse, which only leads to bad outcomes that hurt our passengers and our service and won't accomplish anything.

The next steps are in your hands. We hope everyone feels like we do, that our passengers are too important to abandon and that we all need to work together to focus on implementing solutions that work, rather than wasting time on unrealistic expectations or refusing to acknowledge the City's budget problems or any of the other problems we need to address.

And please remember the sad reality we explained above: all employees could have had substantial wage increases months ago, if only everyone worked together to find a workable solution.

Let's not keep repeating the same mistakes. Mistakes like 2024's failed strike that stranded many innocent passengers for two weeks and cost members approximately $1,000 each in lost pay, even after factoring in strike pay. With good faith collaboration focused on reasonable solutions, we can reach a good outcome for everyone; without it, we will likely face a mess that would have been totally avoidable, and which would leave everyone worse off.

Regardless of how things evolve here, as always, we want the best for all of our teammates, and we will continue to work to build a culture of teamwork and collaboration focused on delivering an outstanding and very safe passenger experience. That is and always will be our primary goal, which we think delivers the best results for our valued passengers and teammates and for all the people of Jackson. We thank you for the important and good work you do every day for the people of Jackson.

MV Transportation Leadership Team