



July 15, 2026

**Members of the Jackson City Council,**

We were disappointed to watch Mr. Charles Tornes, Jr. appear before the City Council on July 14 and wildly misrepresent MV Transportation's efforts to protect transit service for the citizens of Jackson.

Mr. Tornes falsely suggested that the replacement operators currently serving Jackson are somehow inexperienced or unqualified, a very disturbing falsehood. To the contrary, the operators we have deployed are experienced transit professionals from MV operations across the country. They meet the same licensing, training, safety, drug testing, background check, and regulatory requirements as every other MV operator, including those in Jackson. Where required by law, they hold valid Commercial Driver's Licenses (CDLs). They are well qualified. They are well trained. They are safe. And they are going above and beyond the call of duty to provide the reliable service Jackson residents depend on every day.

Our passengers have repeatedly told us how much they appreciate the service they were scared to lose due to this unnecessary and counterproductive strike, and it is our pleasure and our duty to serve them. Perhaps the most astonishing criticism was Mr. Tornes' attempt to portray MV's decision to house and feed these operators as a negative. Let us be clear: MV is paying those costs entirely out of its own pocket because we refuse to allow the people of Jackson to become collateral damage in a strike that local union leadership chose to start. Instead of appreciating those efforts, Mr. Tornes first sought to deny service by initiating an unnecessary strike rather than return to the bargaining table as we requested many times, and now he is again seeking to deny service by preventing equally well trained and well qualified drivers from providing the service our passengers desperately need. It is unconscionable and unfair, and it is important that our passengers and the elected officials who represent them know these facts.

Thanks to the extraordinary efforts of our dedicated and qualified contingency operations staff, MV ensured that EVERY paratransit customer in need of transportation to a medical appointment received service since the strike began. In addition, we operated six fixed-route bus lines on Monday, nine on Tuesday and eleven today (out of twelve), prioritizing the routes with the highest ridership, preserving critical mobility for Jackson residents and greatly reducing the impact of the union's work stoppage on the community. In fact, through these efforts, very few passengers are missing service today.

Instead of acknowledging those efforts, union leadership now wants the community to believe that MV going above and beyond to help our valued passengers is somehow a bad thing.

Most revealing of all was the call for these operators to "go back where they came from." Those comments expose the real issue here. If this dispute were truly about getting a fair agreement for team members, which MV has proposed for months, local union leadership would be encouraging solutions and negotiating, not attacking the men and women of MV who left their families to come to Jackson to serve the community. These operators have shown up to help



seniors in Jackson get to appointments, workers get to jobs, and residents get where they need to go. They deserve gratitude and support, not hostility and abuse.

The deeply unfortunate truth is that as service continues to operate, union leadership appears to be searching for new talking points. First it was wages. When it became clear we were offering wage increases of 20% or more to the vast majority of operators, the excuse became negotiations. When we offered to return to the table many times, including with the help of a federal mediator, and the union leadership refused to do so, they started to attack good people who are simply trying to help the people of Jackson.

None of those arguments change the facts.

Mr. Tornes stood before the City Council yesterday claiming he is leading a strike over wages when the reality is that MV spent more than eight months negotiating with local union leadership and presented a proposal that would have provided the vast majority of represented employees with **GUARANTEED wage increases of 19.9% or more over the next 18 months, while more than one-third would have received GUARANTEED wage increases of 30% or more.** Local **union leadership rejected that proposal.** They also rejected repeated requests for federal mediation that could have helped resolve this dispute. Those decisions belong to union leadership, not MV.

Unable to defend those choices, Mr. Tornes is instead attacking MV's efforts to keep Jackson moving.

Think about that for a moment.

Union leadership rejected a proposal with significant wage increases. Union leadership rejected mediation. Union leadership called the strike. And now union leadership is criticizing the company for spending its own money to ensure riders can still get to work, school, medical appointments, and other essential destinations during the strike.

That argument does not withstand even the most basic scrutiny. The simple fact is that union leadership has denied substantial wage increases to its members through unnecessarily drawn out and now stalled negotiations and now is seeking to deny service to the people of Jackson.

MV Transportation remains committed to reaching a fair agreement, as we have been for months. We remain ready to return to the bargaining table immediately, as we've repeatedly said in multiple written statements. However, we will never apologize for doing everything within our power to protect transit service for the people of Jackson while the union exercises their right to strike.

We will continue to put passengers first and continue to operate safely, no matter what misinformation others may spread for their own agenda.

Respectfully,

MV Transportation

