

August 5, 2020

(via e-mail)

Paul Soubry
CEO
New Flyer Industries
Winnipeg, Canada

Dear Mr. Paul Soubry,

As economic and climate justice organizations in New York, we are very concerned about the findings in the *Diversity For Hire* report. New Flyer has partnered with the Transportation Diversity Council (TDC) to create an astroturf campaign in Alabama that ignores the needs of workers and the community.

We join the Alabama Coalition for Community Benefits – a coalition of workers and civil rights, faith, labor, and community groups – in expressing grave concern over the company’s announcement of a diversity initiative as a low-road campaign deliberately designed to undermine the ongoing fight of Alabama community and workers for a Community Benefits Agreement. We also share the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists’ (CBTU) concerns about workers in New Flyer’s Southern plants who have reported racial discrimination, sexual harassment, retaliation, and dangerous working conditions.

TDC’s involvement with New Flyer is disconcerting on multiple levels. For one, TDC is a New York-based consultancy, but was hired by New Flyer to develop a “Community Benefits Framework” for the Anniston, Alabama factories, even though they have no previous experience working in Alabama or very little with Community Benefits Agreements.

Additionally, the Framework TDC has formulated in lieu of a Community Benefits Agreement (CBA) is ceremonial and completely insubstantial, anti-worker and anti-equity. While a CBA is a legal agreement that would establish real and enforceable commitments around equitable hiring practices, training, and apprenticeship programs, the Framework is decidedly not an agreement, and merely appeases investors, while hijacking agency and undercutting consent from workers and community members.

Not only does New Flyer’s partnership with TDC negatively impact workers and the community, it also reflects the company in a very poor light given the ethical and legal precarities surrounding TDC. As the largest manufacturer of buses for public transit, New Flyer has a critical opportunity to set precedent for exemplary practices, especially in terms of battling systemic racism in the South.

We urge New Flyer to terminate their harmful and regressive collaboration with TDC, and negotiate a legally enforceable Community Benefits Agreement (CBA) that would enable equitable hiring practices, training, apprenticeship programs, and other high-road standards.

Sincerely,

Miranda Nelson
NY/NJ Director
Jobs to Move America

Dennis Trainor
Vice President
**Communications Workers of America,
District 1**

Mike Fisher
Sub-district Director
United Steelworkers, District 4

Allison Considine
NY Campaign Representative, Clean
Transportation for All
Sierra Club

James W. White, Jr.
Director of Strategic Campaigns
**Sheet Metal, Air, Rail and Transportation
Workers**

Angelo Cucuzza
Director of Organizing
Transport Workers Union of America

George Mack
Member
First Unitarian Church of Westchester

A Better Balance
New York Office

Maritza Silva-Farrell
Executive Director
ALIGN

Tracy Romero
Organizing Director
International Union, United Auto Workers