

Statement made at the December 1, 2010, hearing on the CCTA workers' contract negotiations

The executive council of United Academics, representing more than 700 faculty at the University of Vermont, asked me tonight to deliver this message on their behalf.

UVM faculty are fortunate to be able to depend every day on the drivers who operate CCTA's buses and the mechanics who keep those buses in good running order. We have witnessed and appreciate the individual attention CCTA drivers provide to their passengers particularly those who require extra time and help in getting on and leaving the bus. We appreciate how daily they negotiate heavy traffic and poor road conditions to bring us safely to work and back home again. It is obvious to us that their well-being is our well-being.

We therefore urge the board to work with the CCTA drivers and mechanics on their concerns about alleviating fatigue and stress and improving safety and respect in their conditions and scheduling of work. In particular, we hope you will recommend that CCTA manager Chris Cole resume direct negotiations with the bus drivers and mechanics on these issues of safety and well-being for us all. Technology has its place, but yours is a profoundly human industry. We hope you will return to the table to listen to needs and learn from the ideas of the people who are the heart of CCTA.