

# ...Unions react to the MAX killings

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years after that. The PTE 17 board was also expected to consider other ways to honor Best's bravery at its June 15 meeting in Seattle, including the possibility of contributing to the Rick Best Memorial Scholarship Fund, since that is where his family would like donations to go.

Other union members dealt with the aftermath of the attacks in the course of doing their jobs, including members of the Portland Police Association, Teamster-represented paramedics who staff American Medical Response, and TriMet police officers and the TriMet light rail operator who halted the train after the attacks occurred. TriMet employees are represented by Amalgamated Transit Union Local 757, which has been raising concerns about security on board buses and light rail trains

for several years.

But in a May 31 statement about the attacks, Local 757 President Shirley Block expressed opposition to a proposal to increase the presence of armed police officers aboard buses and trains. "Armed police officers aboard transit vehicles intimidate the public, reduce ridership, and provide little more than expensive security theatre," Block wrote. Instead, Block said, the union is calling for a return to well-trained fare inspectors "who can de-escalate and/or assess the proper response to dangerous situations," as well as a reinstatement of TriMet's "Rider Advocate" program, which "recruited and paid individuals from low-income communities and communities of color to ride our buses and trains as liaisons between operators, fare inspectors, riders, and even police." See the full

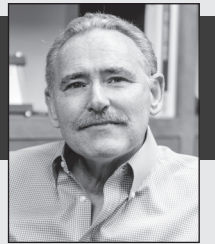
statement at <http://bit.ly/2rmm1pr>.

Oregon AFL-CIO President Tom Chamberlain also issued a statement May 31 in response to the attacks: "The unions of the Oregon AFL-CIO offer our sincere condolences to the families and friends of Taliesin Namkai-Meche and Ricky John Best, and we hope Micah David-Cole Fletcher has a complete recovery," Chamberlain said. "The actions these three took demonstrates a unique combination of bravery and compassion. We hope the two young women who endured a hate-fueled verbal assault can process and ultimately heal from what I can only imagine to be a deeply devastating experience."

"Incidents of hate and hate crimes have been on the rise in our country, and Friday's violence remind Oregonians that we all must stand together in opposition to those who seek to divide us through fear and violence. Oregonians are sickened and disturbed by Friday's events, and I encourage all of us to stand together and continue to take positive actions to protect the rights of us all. It's through unity and solidarity that we will heal from this tragic incident. It's through standing together against hatred that we can stop events like this from happening again."

## Who's on our side?

By Tom Chamberlain Oregon AFL-CIO President



### Protecting Oregon's rural workers

On June 5, the Oregon House approved Senate Bill 1040, the Rural Worker Protection Act, clearing its final legislative hurdle and sending the bill to the governor's desk. This groundbreaking law makes sure that working people are defended against attacks on union security agreements from local jurisdictions, including cities and counties. Often referred to as "right to work" laws, we know they serve one purpose: to dismantle unions and to weaken the collective power of working people.

It is because of a recent decision by the Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals that the Rural Worker Protection Act is so vital: Late last year, the court ruled that local jurisdictions may pass ordinances targeting union security agreements in the private sector — a decision which significantly breaks from how the National Labor Relations Act (NLRA) has been interpreted and implemented since 1947. This decision widens the playing field for opponents of unions, a field which now includes all three branches of the Federal government as well as ballot measures, state laws, and local ordinances. It's open season on unions in America.

The direct result of the Sixth Circuit's decision is that Hardin County in Kentucky could maintain a so-called "right to work" ordinance at the county level. You can bet the ears of anti-union lawmakers at every level of government perked up upon hearing that news. That is why the Rural Worker Protection Act is critical for working Oregonians across our state — it preserves the protection of the NLRA and takes back some of the ground lost by the Sixth Circuit.

Oregon's union movement was instrumental in helping make sure our lawmakers in Salem understood the importance of this bill: Union members and leaders packed hearing rooms, met with legislators and provided a wide range of testimony about why unions are an integral part of Oregon's economy and communities. The Rural Worker Protection Act is another tool in our kit to protect working people, complimenting legislation passed in previous legislative sessions to outlaw captive audience meetings and to keep tax dollars away from fighting union organizing drives in the public sector.

While the status quo of private-sector labor relations is safer in Oregon because of Senate Bill 1040, we are by no means free from worry. We know that each election cycle, ballot measures are circulated with the intent of pulling the rug from underneath working people. Whether it's an attack on the rights of immigrants and refugees or an attempt to weaken our collective bargaining rights, the ballot remains a battlefield for Oregon's values. We expect to see cases before the Supreme Court of the United States, bills in Congress, and ballot measures in our own backyard designed to deal widescale damage to unions and the rights of working people.

We won with Senate Bill 1040, but the next battle will be bigger. Get involved in your union, find ways to help build a stronger organization, learn about the threats we face and what is needed to be done to defend against them. When we all stand together, we can build a stronger movement for a better tomorrow.

Tom Chamberlain is president of the Oregon AFL-CIO, a 130,000-member-strong federation of labor unions.



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Money Market/ Special Club	0.50%	.03%	.03%	.03%	.05%
CDs/Share Certificates					
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12mo	.85%	.05%	.01%	.05%	.10%
24mo	1.25%	.10%	.05%	.15%	.20%
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