



Upcoming Events

UTWSD
Membership Meetings
5348 University Ave, Ste 110

- Monday, April 8, 3:00-4:30pm (forum with Mayor Filner)
- Monday, May 13, 3:00-4:30pm

Information Sessions
7364 El Cajon Blvd. Suite 106

- Tuesday, April 16, 3:00-5:00pm
- Tuesday, May 28, 3:00-5:00pm
- Tuesday, June 18, 3:00-5:00pm

Public Safety and Neighborhood Service (PSNS)
202 C Street, 12th Floor
San Diego, CA 92101

- Wednesday, April 10, 2:00pm
- Wednesday, May 1, 2:00pm
- Wednesday, June 5, 2:00pm

Taxicab Advisory Committee
1255 Imperial Ave, 10th Floor
San Diego, CA 92101

- Friday, April 26, 10:00am
- Friday, June 14, 10:00am (Proposed)
- Friday, Sept 20, 10:00am
- Friday, Dec 13, 10:00am

Metropolitan Transit System (MTS)
1255 Imperial Ave, 10th Floor
San Diego, CA 92101

- Thursday, April 18, 9:00am
- Thursday, May 16, 9:00am
- Thursday, June 20, 9:00am

Airport Meetings
Commuter Terminal, 3rd Floor
3225 North Harbor Drive
San Diego, CA 92101

- Thursday, April 4, 9:00am
- Thursday, May 2, 9:00am
- Thursday, June 6, 9:00am

For more information about important industry meetings and events, contact UTWSD today!

Mission:

The mission of UTWSD is to unify taxicab workers, to improve working conditions through direct advocacy and empowerment, to increase education and civic participation by taxi drivers and their families, and to improve professional transportation services for San Diego communities and visitors.

Vision:

We envision a driver-led taxi Association that provides exceptional, efficient, and safe service for residents and visitors, and that meets the comprehensive and diverse needs of taxi drivers. We also envision a taxi industry environment free from humiliation, intimidation, discrimination, and exploitation, which will improve the transportation services of San Diego County.

UNITED TAXI WORKERS OF SAN DIEGO (UTWSD)

UTWSD was founded in January 2010 to sustain and advance the leadership and empowerment of the Dec '09 drivers' strike.

The *UTWSD Meter* is published to support driver leadership, to document and disseminate drivers' voices, and to inform and educate drivers and allies for better organizing.

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A New Taxi Industry

Under New Mayor, A Better Taxi Industry is Possible



Mayor Filner Addresses Drivers at UTWSD Forum

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

For over three years many of us have worked hard with UTWSD and its partner, the Employee Rights Center, to reform the taxi system in San Diego and improve the working conditions of all drivers, especially lease taxi drivers. It all started with the December 2009 strike and then the struggle took many twists and turns up to now. Now we see MTS chose to not address the hard issues for taxi drivers in its proposal for a renewed contract with the City of San Diego. Why did this happen?



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the city, which is the structure in almost every other major city in the country. The primary reasons include **increased safety** (under MTS 94% of cars failed inspection), **improved working conditions** (drivers could work upwards of 16 hour shifts with an average of \$4.45 per hour take home, no job security or health care), and **city revenue** (the many medallion transfers brought virtually no money to the city).

The plight of the lease drivers became a passion for Mayor Filner after a September visit to the UTWSD office on his campaign trail. The drivers' stories of safety and labor issues, of harassment and disrespect resonated with the former Freedom Rider, and protecting the drivers and our vital immigrant and refugee communities became a top priority of his pre- and post-election platform. Mayor Filner explained his high estimation directly to drivers at a UTWSD forum: "When we put together the new ordinance you will be there at the table helping put it together. You're going to create the world you want to live in. So you've got to do it responsibly, you got to do it fairly, you got to do it compassionately, you have to have concern for our consumers and the tourists who come here

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President's Message
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For the past two years UTWSD and ERC have pushed for reform in the taxi industry, and MTS rejected every one of those significant proposed changes! In late 2011 UTWSD & ERC and its Allies did get one big change from MTS – equal representation of lease taxi drivers on the Taxi Advisory Committee beginning with the election of the first ever elected lease driver representatives by a secret ballot election. Our election campaign resulted in 400 lease taxi drivers voting for their first two representatives. Democracy was beginning!

In the fall of 2012 UTWSD & ERC argued that the one-sided leases that left drivers with no rights, no protections, and no say over their working conditions would continue under any future MTS contract with the City. Facing the heat of the drivers and allies, MTS bailed!

The primary lesson of these three years of struggle is that a dedicated group of workers, whether employees or contractors, can win victories when their aspirations reflect justice on the job, their tactics use their strengths, and their strategy includes finding good allies in the community. These are lessons common to all struggles for worker and social justice.

What is next for us? Help reform the industry. This is complicated and will take time. We want to look at other cities' models, work with new people at the Mayor's office and in the City Council. Permit holders will also have their say.

This is a new period for UTWSD. The past can now be celebrated for bringing taxi drivers to this point with so many new opportunities to gain control over our working conditions. Let's first celebrate and taste the victory of this moment. Then let's organize for the next stage. And remember:

We are not alone. We have rights!
-Mikail Hussein, President

A New Taxi Industry
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and make sure that they have a good experience. That they have safety but you have the ability to earn a decent living. You work hard, you deserve livable wages. You deserve to support your families. You deserve to have a future. Because we need you. We need your service in San Diego. We can't be a city without you and so we want to respect you also. We have to tell the public that you're needed. You're serving the public. And you want to do it in the best way possible. But all those issues, you know the best. So I need you at the table."

The "table" is currently a task force that will establish the city commission to run the industry. UTWSD will be heavily represented on both the task force and commission, and will join other stakeholders in creating a new industry that works for everybody. Mayor Filner elaborated, "Your representatives need to report back about what's going on and you need to keep them in touch with what is needed. We'll have a structured way to hear

your ideas. I guarantee that your ideas will be heard. It's not going to be stacked against you."

UTWSD is currently compiling information about taxi industry models from across the country and refining our analysis of what hasn't worked in our own city. We will continue to host driver forums and membership meetings to answer the mayor's call, so we need your input. As we go forward let's not forget what our struggle for the past three years has taught us. When drivers come together with the community to fight for justice on the job they can achieve anything! Become an active driver member and help organize a better taxi industry for the City of San Diego!

2009

Dec 2009 – Drivers strike.

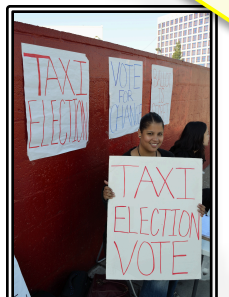
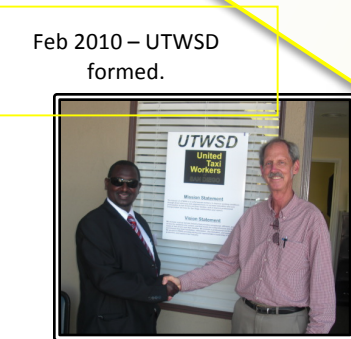
2010

Feb 2010 – UTWSD formed.

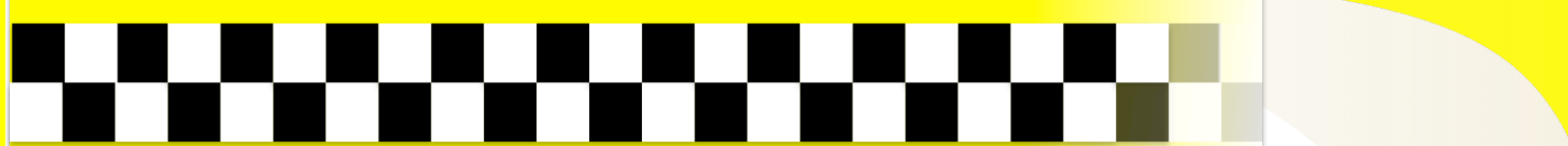
2011

Nov 2011 – UTWSD helps elect new TAC driver reps.

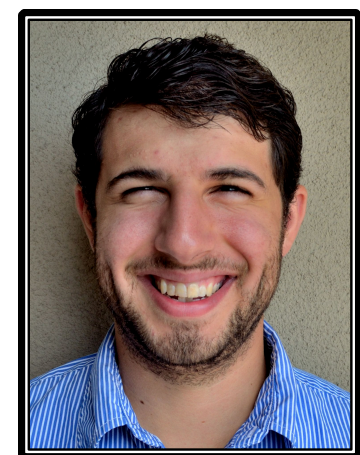
Summer 2010 – UTWSD lobbies MTS, TAC, Airport, and PSNS on behalf of drivers.



July 2012 – UTWSD becomes first non-union SD Labor Council affiliate.

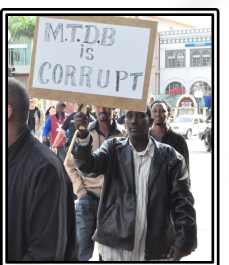


ADVOCATE SPOTLIGHT



Brian Giardina

Spring 2012 – UTWSD helps striking drivers end front of the line privileges and 38-cent trip fee at airport.



Fall 2012 – UTWSD pressures MTS and City on industry administration contract.

Nov 2012 – UTWSD helps elect Mayor Filner.



Mar 2013 – Mayor Filner recognizes UTWSD and lays out plan for a new, non-corrupt SD taxi industry led by drivers.



We are very proud to honor one of UTWSD's most amazing supporters, legal intern Brian Giardina. A second year law student at the University of San Diego (USD), Brian's focus with UTWSD over the past 8 months has been to protect lease drivers' rights in areas of policy and regulatory reform.

His responsibilities have included reviewing and analyzing City Ordinances 11 and 5, which regulate the taxi industry. Brian has helped conduct rights and responsibilities workshops for drivers, and has filed driver's complaints and handled their grievances and contract negotiations. Brian has worked on the campaign to stop illegal TCP's and charters buses, in particular with hotels. He led the charge in working with the SD Police Department to address over ticketing and a Taxi On Patrol program.

Brian was instrumental in our huge victory at the airport to

stop front of the line privileges and a proposed excessive trip fee. Additionally, Brian has advocated for drivers at meetings by with elected officials, the MTS board of directors, and Taxi Advisory Committee.

Before attending USD School of Law Brian earned a Master of Arts in Justice Studies from the University of New Hampshire. Brian has also worked as a graduate teaching assistant, tracked energy related legislation in the California legislature, and assisted in a searchable legislative database. His research skills have been invaluable asset to UTWSD.

So on behalf of all drivers, UTWSD wants to express our gratitude for Brian's generosity and dedication. We are extremely happy to have Brian as a member of our team and we salute him for his advocacy efforts and his dedication to protecting workers rights in the San Diego taxi cab industry!