



Committee for Justice for Hector Rivas
 Safety for Students, Workers and Community!



Who We Are

Defending Health and Safety for Students, Workers and the Community - a coalition led by the Rivas and Camacho families includes the UAW, Painters D. 35, the Boston school bus drivers United Steelworkers 8751, "Team Unity", the city's Councilors of Color, Chuck Turner, Felix Arroyo, Charles Yancey and Sam Yoon, Bishop Filipe Teixeira, Rosa Parks Human Rights Day Committee, Voices of Liberation, Women's Fightback Network, International Action Center, Mass Coalition on Occupational Safety and Health, student and community activists.

Committee for Justice for Hector Rivas
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COMMITTEE FOR JUSTICE FOR HECTOR RIVAS

The mission of this committee is to secure a safer and healthier working environment for all mechanics and bus drivers. This in turn will secure safer buses for our children and cleaner environments in the neighborhoods that are being serviced by these buses.

On March 9, 2006, Hector Rivas, a veteran mechanic for the Boston Public School buses and a United Auto Workers (UAW) Local 1596 member, died while at work as a result of carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning from a First Student service truck. A Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) investigation found that workers at the Freeport Street Bus yardlocation were exposed to high CO levels. On April 18, another BPS bus mechanic, Miguel Camacho, suffered a shattered pelvis resulting from an accident involving an illegally modified airlift. On Tuesday, November 14th, 19 persons including students and bus drivers were sent to the hospital following the collision of three city of Boston School buses resulting from failed antilock braking systems. Members of families, the workers, the students and the communities want to hold First Student and the Boston Public Schools department accountable.

There is a multitude of evidence that demonstrate the negligence on the part of First Student Inc and the City of Boston. They have failed to commit to providing a safe and healthy working environment for their employees, our children and communities. We need your support to put pressure on our city's administration and First Student Inc to correct the problems we have revealed and protect our communities from harm!

Environmental Racism: What do heart attacks, asthma, stunted lung growth, and cancer have in common?

When engines are not cleaned, greases, fluids and oils build up on the engine block which, when heated, create toxic fumes that dangerously expose drivers, students and the greater community to heart attacks, asthma, stunted lung growth and cancer. 3 out of 4 bus yards in the city of Boston, all housed in communities of color, do not have the proper equipment to clean school bus engines. This is merely one example of the many safety violations on the part of First Student Inc. that the Committee for Justice for Hector Rivas has uncovered.

At the December 12, 2006 public hearing on school bus safety Richard Jacobs, Director of Transportation for the Boston School Department confidently stated that there are only 5 bus break downs a day. That underestimation would mean over 900 break downs per school year! Are you as comfortable with that number as Jacobs?

Corporate Greed: How much is a life really worth? \$95,000? \$40?

First Student Inc. bid 10 million dollars less than all other companies for the contract to manage the Boston Public School Bus Fleet. Since winning the contract, student's, worker's, and the greater communities' lives have all been put at risk due to rampant safety violations, disregard for the law and life in order to maintain their profit margin. For two years prior to his tragic death, Mr. Rivas has requested that the company ventilate the service trucks—a modification which would have cost the company as little as \$40 per truck. OSHA fined First Student \$95,000 for willful negligence—a mere slap on the wrist. It seems as if contracts in the city are made based on politics rather than interest that best suit the community. We must hold our elected officials responsible for not acting justly and fairly in governing the city. Hector Rivas was a city employee who died on the job, and the only public acknowledgment of his life and work has come from the city councilors of color, "Team Unity." The mass corporate media has chosen to boycott this issue. One is left to wonder had Hector been of European descent rather than Puerto Rican would the cities response have been different?

More information is available at our website:
www.iacboston.org/hector_rivas/hector_rivas.html

Immigrant Rights: Why does your citizenship determine your worth?

Certain work has been "racialized." Hector was a Puerto Rican and US Citizen. However, despite his citizenship status due to the current context of immigration policies, citizens and non-citizens are equally penalized, stigmatized and discriminated against due to their culture, language, and type of work they perform.

- ⇒ City Council unanimously passed a resolution recognizing the negligence on the part of First Student in the wrongful death of Hector Rivas and injury of Miguel Camacho.
- ⇒ City Council hearing held December 12, 2006 set a precedent for quarterly hearings with community, First Student and the Boston Education Department to review the status of the correction of sited negligence.

Get Involved

- ⇒ Join the committee
- ⇒ Check the website regularly for upcoming events
- ⇒ Contact your elected official
- ⇒ Let the mayor know how you feel
- ⇒ Spread the word
- ⇒ Provide Financial Support
- ⇒ Attend the Next City Council Hearing on School Bus Safety



Please Join Us for a
**Candle Light Vigil for
Hector Rivas**

March 9, 2007 at 6:00 PM
Freeport Street Bus yard
Dorchester, MA 02122