

Premier must intervene to stop bus privatisation: NSW Government announces bus tenders

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Bus drivers are today calling on the NSW Premier, Gladys Berejiklian to urgently intervene and put a stop to bus privatisation – a move which will rob commuters of local bus stops and routes.

The call comes after the NSW Government today took the extraordinary step of officially releasing the tenders for the privatisation of buses in regions 8, which covers areas from Palm Beach all the way into the CBD. Region 8 is the first tender to be released, with regions 7 and 9 (eastern Suburbs and Ryde/Willoughby) to follow.

Tram and Bus Division Secretary of the Rail, Tram and Bus Union (RTBU) NSW, David Babineau,

said after staying silent on the issue, it is critical the NSW Premier, Gladys Berejiklian, now intervene in the decision which will see bus stop and route closures across Sydney.

“The move to push ahead with bus privatisation in the middle of a COVID-19 crisis and despite overwhelmingly public opposition is disgraceful and a sign of sheer arrogance from the NSW Government,” Mr Babineau said.

“We’re calling for urgent crisis talks with the NSW Premier and for her to intervene and put a stop to this attack on our local bus services.

“The NSW Government has received tens of thousands of emails, phone call and petition signatures from commuters concerned about the impact privatisation will have on their local bus service, but they’ve decided to just ignore the public and push ahead with the privatisation regardless.

“We’re calling on the Premier explain to the public why her government is ignoring commuter concerns and give a rock solid guarantee that not a single bus stop will close, not a single route will be cut, and not a single worker will be left worse off.

“This move will see bus services and stops cut. There’s no two ways about that. People are going to see a decline in the quality and frequency of their bus service once the private companies take the reins.

The tender announcement comes just days after a debate in Parliament on the issue and city-wide actions were held in protest of the move to privatise the bus services. Buses in regions 7, 8 and 9 are responsible for more than half of all bus trips made in the state.