



"Freedom Through Organized Labor"

Amalgamated Transit Union

Local 1395

AFFILIATED WITH AFL-CIO

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AMALGAMATED TRANSIT UNION LOCAL 1395
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To: Local Media Outlets – Pensacola, Florida

PRESS RELEASE – Amalgamated Transit Union Local 1395, AFL-CIO endorses Alan McMillan for Escambia County Commissioner, District 2 Republican primary and Vikki Garrett for Florida State House of Representative, District 1 Democratic primary.

Pensacola – On Sunday, June 24th the membership of the Amalgamated Transit Union Local 1395 which represents the Transit workers of Escambia County Area Transit (ECAT) and Escambia County Community Transportation (ECCT) voted unanimously to endorse and support Alan McMillan, Republican candidate for Escambia County Commissioner, District 2 during the primary. The Union notes Alan McMillan's history of serving on the Escambia County Mass Transit Advisory Board for 3 years. "During our interview process, it was clear that Alan was going to address the needs and concerns of the Transit systems with an open and professional thought process" said Michael A. Lowery, President / Business Agent of Local 1395. McMillan stated to the Union membership that he looks at Transit as a vital need for economic development and stability for many citizens of our community. The Union which has had a very public discourse and differences with incumbent Commissioner Doug Underhill which has often played out at Commissioner public forums and on social media has been going on for over a year. Lowery added, "It was clear we couldn't even consider Commissioner Underhill who we worry is threatening the bus riders we provide service to and his only goal is to eliminate and weaken their mode of transportation and potentially these citizens would suffer loss of employment."

The Union also endorsed Vikki Garrett for Florida State House of Representative, District 1 during the Democratic primary. Garrett who served as a Transportation Planner for the West Florida Regional Planning Council has a long history with ECAT and ECCT. It was Garrett who secured a million-dollar grant that helped provide new Paratransit buses for the County fleet and replaced the unsafe vehicles which a former contractor of the service had run into the ground and potentially put clients riding Escambia County Community Transportation in danger. The Paratransit system which transports the elderly and disabled citizens of Escambia County to their jobs, doctor appointments and shopping lobbied County Commissioners along with the Union in 2012/13 of the unsafe vehicles. Vikki Garrett who also recently received the endorsement of the Florida AFL-CIO has gained labor support throughout the panhandle. "She is a friend lifelong resident and supporter of the citizens for district 1" stated Lowery.

The Union plans to reevaluate both races after the primary and look at endorsements going forward into the General Election. The ATU is also meeting Tuesday with all six candidates for Escambia County Commissioner, District 4 race to consider endorsement.

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