

## Man who punched bus driver sentenced to year of probation

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**VICTORIA:** Another example of a lenient sentence for assaulting a transit worker occurred last week in a B.C. provincial courthouse. A man who punched a bus driver and smashed three bus windows after being told to leave for drinking beer was sentenced to one year on probation Thursday.

Tom Szilagyi, 24, pleaded guilty in Victoria provincial court to assault causing bodily harm and mischief, in connection with the Oct. 27, 2006 incident. Earlier statements from Saanich police stated the bus driver noticed two young men drinking beer at the back of the bus and asked them to leave. On the way out, one of them punched the bus driver and once outside punched several windows. Szilagyi, who has no previous criminal record, turned himself into police after reading about the incident in the Times Colonist.

Such sentences are unacceptable as they treat assaults on transit workers as "one-offs" or isolated incidents rather than as part of an escalating trend. The judicial system across the country needs to address this problem before a transit worker is killed in the course of an assault.