



MURIEL BOWSER
MAYOR

October 19, 2016

Paul J. Wiedefeld
General Manager and Chief Executive Officer
Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority

Dear Mr. Wiedefeld,

Last Tuesday, the Council of the District of Columbia unanimously passed a resolution opposing your plan to curtail late-night service on Metrorail. The resolution, which recognizes that safety and reliability of the Metro system are critically important, gives many reasons for opposing your plan, including the negative effect it will have on the Metropolitan region's workers (particularly low-income workers), residents, businesses, and visitors. I also oppose your plan as do many elected officials in the surrounding counties.

The region supported the ongoing SafeTrack maintenance plan because you clearly demonstrated a need and set a firm end date. That plan also took a phased approach to maintenance, which left much of the Metro system open for business. That is not the case with the late-night service cuts: there has been no articulation of a need, a plan, or how the plan is designed to solve the problem. For example, why close the entire system when you can only work on discrete segments at any one time? Why would the service cuts be permanent?

The closure you propose is outsized when compared to how similar systems operate. Before SafeTrack began, our system was closed for 33 hours per week. The ongoing SafeTrack work closes the system for 39 hours per week for system maintenance. Your closure proposal would keep Metrorail closed for 41 hours—or 12 hours longer than the transit system serving Boston, 7 hours longer than system serving San Francisco, between 6 and 13 hours longer than Philadelphia's system, and 11 hours longer than Atlanta's.

Also, I am concerned by proposals you announced last week that would reduce operating hours at 20 stations, eliminate bus routes, and increase fares. I understand that these proposals are intended to balance a budget deficit created in part by declining ridership levels. However, before further burdening riders, I challenge you and your staff to look for cost-saving measures, like administrative efficiencies.

You and I agree that the future of Metro requires a commitment to and investment in making the system safer and more reliable. As the Mayor of nearly 700,000 residents, I hope you understand that I have a commitment to get people to work, to keep shops and restaurants open for business, and to welcome visitors from around the world. I look forward to your response to the concerns I have raised.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Muriel Bowser". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, prominent "B" at the end.

Mayor Muriel Bowser