



MONTGOMERY COUNTY COUNCIL
ROCKVILLE, MARYLAND

March 31, 2010

Honorable Martin O'Malley
Office of the Governor
100 State Circle
Annapolis, Maryland
21401-1925

Dear Governor O'Malley:

We are writing to urge you to fund the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority's (WMATA) FY11 operating budget at a level that will not reduce service on its Metrorail and Metrobus system.

Montgomery County prides itself on being a leader in transit-oriented development. However, in order for areas such as Rockville, Bethesda, White Flint, Silver Spring and Wheaton to thrive, they depend on a reliable rail and bus system for economic viability. Further, multi-modal transportation demand will increase with the expansion of the National Naval Medical Center. Transit is a critical to the region's economy, and WMATA is a vital component of the infrastructure and services that help get our residents to their destinations.

The service reductions proposed in WMATA's budget would potentially reduce peak and off-peak capacity, service hours, and truncate lines on the Metrorail system. The potential impact on bus service would be even greater, with proposals to reduce service and increase bus fares at a much higher rate than rail fares.

In Montgomery County, we are no stranger to challenging budgetary times. In November 2009, the Council approved an amended FY10 savings plan of roughly \$30 million; and in February 2010, a second savings plan of \$70 million. However, in each of these budget reductions, the County Council has opposed cuts to Ride On routes.

While WMATA is proposing fare increases, closing its budget gap would also require an additional contribution from Maryland to WMATA's FY11 operating budget. We urge you to prioritize this contribution as a commitment to the region's future.

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Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,



Nancy Floreen
Council President



Valerie Ervin
Council Vice President



Roger Berliner
Councilmember



Marc Elrich
Councilmember



George Leventhal
Councilmember



Nancy Navarro
Councilmember



Duchy Trachtenberg
Councilmember

cc: Beverley K. Swaim-Staley, Secretary, Maryland Department of Transportation
Joseph C. Bryce, Chief Legislative Officer, Governor's Legislative Office
Richard Sarles, General Manager of Metro, WMATA
Peter Benjamin, Chairman, WMATA Board of Directors
Elizabeth M. Hewlett, WMATA Board of Directors