



October 11, 2016

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Paul Wiedefeld  
General Manager and Chief Executive Officer  
Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA)  
600 Fifth Street, NW  
Washington, D.C. 20001

Re: Metrorail Hours of Service

Dear Mr. Wiedefeld:

WMATA's proposal to end late-night weekend service and curtail standard service on Sundays has raised concerns about the potential long-term consequences such changes would have on Northern Virginia's jurisdictions, residents and businesses. On behalf of the Northern Virginia Transportation Commission, I am requesting that WMATA consider these concerns as it seeks to establish permanent hours of operation following the completion of SafeTrack.

NVRTC both recognizes the importance of and appreciates the intent behind your proposal to modify Metrorail's service hours. We agree that state of good repair should be a priority, as lapses jeopardize the safety of crew and passengers. It is our hope that WMATA will be able to strike an appropriate balance between the need for late-night weekend service and ongoing rail maintenance.

Metrorail is vital to Northern Virginia's economy. Roughly 80,000 jobs are within a quarter-mile of the 25 Metrorail stations west of the Potomac River. Many of these jobs are in the food-and-beverage, hospitality, and tourism industries, which would experience the greatest impact from curtailed service. It is no surprise, for example, that Arlington tops all counties in the Commonwealth in the amount of tax revenues generated from tourism. Visitors depend on the County's 11 Metrorail stations to provide easy access to other parts of the metropolitan region, as do many of the 26,000 individuals working in Arlington's tourism industry. In Alexandria, also home to a significant hospitality and tourism industry, access to Metro and other public transportation was cited by 46.4 percent of visitors as one of the attributes contributing to their decision to stay in the city, according to a recent survey.

Restaurants, bars and clubs in Northern Virginia attract customers from throughout the metropolitan region, many of whom travel by Metro. Conversely, residents of NVTC's jurisdictions frequent bars, clubs and sporting event venues in the District of Columbia, many of which close after the last train of the evening has departed under Metro's proposed scenarios. Metrorail's late-night service allows revelers and fans to travel home in a safe and responsible manner. Termination of such service could lead some to make less responsible travel choices.

WMATA's plan to provide Metrobus service in place of Metrorail may be an effective option, but we need to be assured that this service will be a reliable and convenient alternative to Metrorail services. Further, NVTC and its jurisdictions which subsidize Metrorail, need to be provided a true understanding of the cost implications of substituting bus for rail under WMATA's proposal.

I wish to make one other important point. Tens of thousands of our constituents rely on Metro to get to and from their jobs during rush hours. There have already been significant disruptions to this service. We request that in the future you consider these disruptions as well, consistent with the need to upgrade the safety of the system.

There is little doubt that the success of Northern Virginia's economy is tied to the success of Metrorail. First and foremost, it is in the interest of both NVTC and WMATA to ensure that Metrorail is able to transport passengers safely and reliably. It also is in the interest of both agencies to ensure that Metrorail continues to provide service that allows our businesses to thrive, as the tax revenues they generate support our jurisdictions' Metrorail subsidies.

Sincerely,



Jay Fisetle  
Chairman