

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND REFORM
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MEMORANDUM

February 4, 2022

To: Members of the Subcommittee on Government Operations

Fr: Committee Staff

Re: Hearing on “Revitalizing WMATA: Getting to a Culture of Excellence”

On **Wednesday, February 9, 2022, at 9:00 a.m. ET**, the Subcommittee on Government Operations will hold a hearing to examine the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority’s (WMATA) responsibility to provide safe and reliable transit service to the National Capital Region. The Subcommittee will evaluate WMATA’s funding, operations, governance, and oversight. The hearing will convene in person in **room 2154 of the Rayburn House Office Building and remotely on the Zoom video platform**.

I. WMATA OPERATIONS AND OVERSIGHT RESPONSIBILITIES

In 1967, an interstate compact between Washington, D.C., Maryland, and Virginia created WMATA to contribute to the transportation needs of the National Capital Region.¹ WMATA owns and operates more than \$42 billion in physical assets. WMATA’s fiscal year (FY) 2022 approved budget is \$4.7 billion, including a \$2.6 billion annual capital budget for safety, service, and reliability investments.²

WMATA is the third largest heavy rail transit system and sixth largest bus network in the country. It is also an essential component of transit for the functioning of the federal government.³ In 2019, prior to the pandemic, WMATA’s total ridership reached nearly 300 million trips per year with an average weekday Metrorail ridership of 626,000.⁴ To put that in

¹ Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority, *Milestones & History* (online at www.wmata.com/about/history.cfm) (accessed Jan. 4, 2022).

² Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority, *Metro Snapshot 2021* (2021) (online at www.wmata.com/about/upload/Metro-Snapshot-of-Milestones-2021.pdf).

³ Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority, *10-Year Capital Needs Forecast (FY2019 – 2028)* (online at www.wmata.com/initiatives/plans/upload/2019-Capital-Needs-Forecast.pdf) (accessed Feb. 3, 2022).

⁴ Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority, *Rail Ridership Data Viewer* (online at www.wmata.com/initiatives/ridership-portal/Rail-Data-Portal.cfm) (accessed Jan. 4, 2022).

perspective, WMATA moves four times more people each year than the three major airports in the National Capital Region combined.

The WMATA system serves 91 rail stations with 1,278 rail cars and spans 130 miles of tracks across the National Capital Region.⁵ More than half of WMATA's rail stations serve federal facilities, and approximately one-third of Metrorail's peak period commuters are federal employees.

II. WITNESSES

Mr. Paul J. Wiedefeld

General Manager
Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority

Mr. Geoffrey Cherrington

Inspector General
Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority

Mr. Paul C. Smedberg

Board Chair, Board of Directors
Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority

Mr. David L. Mayer

Chief Executive Officer
Washington Metrorail Safety Commission

Staff contacts: Wendy Ginsberg and Joshua Kravitz at (202) 225-5051.

⁵ Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority, *FY2022 Budget* (online at www.wmata.com/about/records/upload/FY2022_Approved_Budget_Final_071421.pdf) (accessed Jan. 5, 2021)