



# COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

## Office of the Governor

W. Sheppard Miller III  
Secretary of Transportation

November 1, 2022

The Honorable Dave W. Marsden, Chairman  
Senate Transportation Committee  
Post Office Box 10889  
Burke, Virginia 22009

The Honorable Terry L. Austin, Chairman  
House Transportation Committee  
Post Office Box 400  
Buchanan, Virginia 24066

Dear Senator Marsden and Delegate Austin,

*Virginia Code* § 33.2-3102 requires the Secretary of Transportation to provide a quarterly update on Virginia's efforts to work with its counterparts in Maryland, the District of Columbia, and the federal government, as well as the Northern Virginia Transportation Commission (NVTC), on necessary reforms of the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) to support a viable transit system. This letter serves as the update for the quarter ending September 30, 2022.

- 1) **Labor costs and labor relations**
- 2) **Measures necessary to resolve WMATA's unfunded pension liability and other postemployment benefit**
- 3) **Financial and operational improvements necessary to ensure that WMATA's performance is at least as efficient as its closest comparable transit system in the United States**

Fiscal Year 2023 Budget: WMATA's FY23 budget, effective July 1, complies with the statutory three percent cap on the annual growth of the Virginia operating subsidy. During the quarter, DRPT reviewed documentation related to the WMATA FY 23 budget, performed an independent analysis and coordinated a legal review with the Office of Attorney General. DRPT staff determined that WMATA complied with the statutory requirements. DRPT presented its findings to the Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) at its workshop on September 20 along with a recommendation that the CTB certify WMATA's compliance with the specific provisions of the Code recommending no withholding of funds for non-compliance. The CTB accepted DRPT's recommendation at its meeting on October 25.

Pension Plans: In July, the WMATA Board Executive Committee accepted an Office of Inspector General (OIG) audit of the defined benefit pension plans.

WMATA New Headquarters: On September 30, WMATA officially opened its new headquarters near L'Enfant Plaza. WMATA's reduced office footprint will save the agency \$130 million in operating cost over the next twenty years.

Better Bus Service Redesign: On September 22, the WMATA Board adopted principles for the next step of the Bus Transformation Project, being called the "Better Bus Service Redesign Project". One of the principles is determining a "long-term sustainable, predictable funding model for bus service". This redesign was recommended by the 2017 WMATA study led by former USDOT Secretary Ray LaHood and DRPT.

#### **4) Measures Necessary to Better Ensure the Safety of Riders and Employees**

7000 Series Railcars: WMATA submitted a revised plan to return 160 railcars (20 total trains) to service with daily inspections to the Washington Metrorail Safety Commission (WMSC) on September 2, which had no objections. Through September, WMATA had completed 53,000 back-to-back measurements and its active 7000 Series railcars had travelled 1.5 million miles without any wheel axles being found out of tolerance; however, WMATA did not operate more than 14 total 7000 Series trains in service on any weekday due to restrictions placed on their use by the WMSC. On October 25, WMATA submitted a revised plan to the WMSC, which was subsequently accepted with no technical objections. The return of the 7000 Series railcars to service, with monitoring, allows for increased capacity on the system to reduce crowding and the opening of the Silver Line extension on November 15.

Train Control Rooms: On August 4, WMSC issued an order to WMATA regarding cleaning and inspecting rail control rooms. The control rooms contain equipment to monitor train movements and operate the Automatic Train Control (ATC) equipment. The order requires WMATA to complete ATC quarterly inspections by October 31, resume and complete special safety inspections of control rooms, and develop a Corrective Action Plan (CAP) to address the findings.

#### **5) Legal and organizational structure of WMATA**

#### **6) Composition and qualifications of the WMATA Board of Directors and the length of terms of its members**

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Board Bylaws: On June 28, 2018, the WMATA Board adopted bylaws with governance changes required by the Virginia 2018 dedicated funding legislation. The bylaws are still in effect.

Thank you for your continued support. Please let me know if you have any questions or comments.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "W. Sheppard Miller, III" with a stylized flourish at the end.

W. Sheppard Miller, III