

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

March 27, 2019

The Honorable David Price
Chair
Subcommittee on Transportation, Housing
And Urban Development, and Related
Agencies
House Appropriations Committee
2358A Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Mario Diaz-Balart
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Transportation, Housing
And Urban Development, and Related
Agencies
House Appropriations Committee
1016 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Price and Ranking Member Diaz-Balart:

We write to request the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Transportation, Housing and Urban Development continue to provide the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) with \$150 million in federal funds for critical capital and safety improvements.

The Passenger Rail Investment and Improvement Act of 2008 (PRIIA, PL 110-432) established a successful federal-state partnership under which the three WMATA jurisdictions collectively match this federal investment with an additional \$150 million each year. There is an active, bicameral effort underway to improve and reauthorize PRIIA to maintain the federal government's necessary contribution to the national capital's transit system. However, without continued federal participation this successful funding partnership would unravel, leaving a massive shortfall in WMATA's capital budget.

WMATA is a \$40 billion asset to the National Capital Region and is essential to the operation of the federal government, with federal employees representing approximately 40 percent of Metrorail's peak period customers. More than one-third of all Metrorail stations are located on federal property, serving federal facilities. Unlike other transportation networks in the nation, the WMATA system serves a unique vital national security role for the federal government, providing transportation for thousands of federal employees traveling to and from the Pentagon, Department of Homeland Security facilities, and the Federal Bureau of Investigation headquarters. On multiple occasions, the system has demonstrated it is vital during times of crisis, including evacuation for weather events and national emergencies.

For all of these reasons, Congress has consistently appropriated dedicated federal funding for WMATA, recognizing the special responsibility the federal government has to help "America's Subway" fulfill these functions safely and reliably.


The combined \$300 million in annual funding from the federal-state partnership has traditionally represented 40 percent of the capital budget for WMATA. The sustained investment over the course of the last decade has enabled the system to meet critical safety capital needs. This vital funding

has enabled nearly \$1 billion in railcar acquisitions and facilities investments, including the acquisition of new 7000 series railcars; the award of a \$100 million contract to install a 700 MHz radio system to improve communications of public safety personnel; the replacement of second generation track circuits as identified by the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) to upgrade the train control system; and the now completed SafeTrack program which rehabilitated, replaced, and restored sections of track infrastructure. The combined federal-state funding partnership has enabled WMATA to make critical and sustained investments in its railcars, rail system, track structures, station and passenger facilities, buses and bus facilities, and paratransit system.

Last year, Washington, D.C., Maryland, and Virginia worked together to establish – for the first time in the history of the system – a dedicated source of funding for WMATA’s capital needs. The agreement will provide \$500 million in annual funding. This coincided with a successful effort to constitute the Metrorail Safety Commission, which is certified by the Federal Transit Administration to serve as the State Safety Oversight Agency for WMATA. These multi-jurisdictional initiatives demonstrate a shared commitment to a sustained investment in the safety and reliability of the national capital transit system. The federal government has willing partners in the effort to provide accountability and support for this vital transit system.

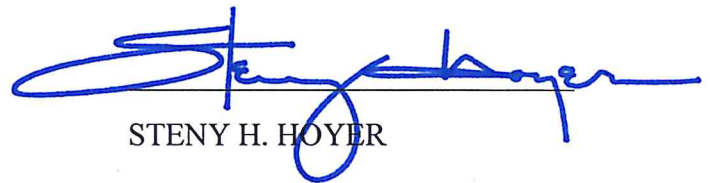
We understand the Subcommittee faces difficult choices and must focus limited resources on essential services. We firmly believe that WMATA more than meets this criteria, and we respectfully request that the Subcommittee provide WMATA with \$150 million in capital funding in Fiscal Year 2020. Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,



GERALD E. CONNOLLY

Member of Congress



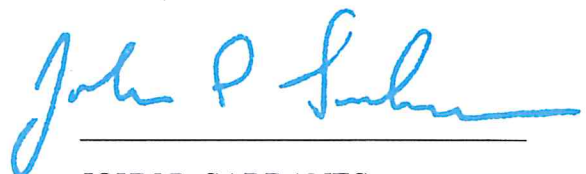
STENY H. HOYER

Member of Congress



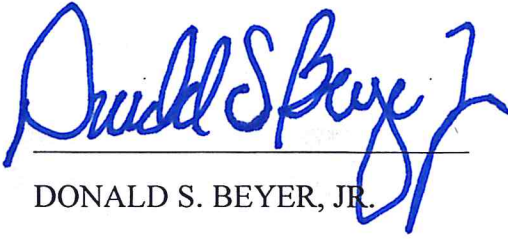
ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

Member of Congress



JOHN P. SARBANES

Member of Congress



DONALD S. BEYER, JR.

Member of Congress



ANTHONY G. BROWN

Member of Congress




JAMIE RASKIN

Member of Congress



JENNIFER WEXTON

Member of Congress



DAVID TRONE

Member of Congress