



OFFICE OF THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE

ROCKVILLE, MARYLAND 20850

Isiah Leggett
County Executive

October 25, 2017

Mr. Paul J. Wiedefeld
General Manager and Chief Executive Officer
Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority
600 Fifth Street, NW
Washington, DC 20001

Dear Mr. Wiedefeld:

For 10 years, Montgomery County has made the elimination of the Grosvenor turnbacks a top priority. Therefore, I was deeply disappointed and concerned that WMATA appears to be backing away from its Board Resolution 2015-37 to commit to eliminate the turnbacks starting in July 2018, as stated in your September 15, 2017 response to Montgomery County Department of Transportation Director Al Roshdieh's recent letter.

I understand the pressures and constraints that WMATA has faced recently. However, the concerns stated in the response to Mr. Roshdieh's letter are the first time any operational and technical challenges to eliminating the turnbacks, including during peak periods, have been raised and the first time that WMATA has indicated it is reconsidering its commitment.

In your letter, you stated that a major obstacle in the past was a lack of rail cars, but rail cars are now available. You also raised technical obstacles concerning infrastructure to accommodate more trains; however, as you know, the Metrorail system was designed to accommodate a 2.5-minute headway, or 24 trains per hour. Historically, levels of Metrorail service have included providing from 15 to 24 trains per hour to Grosvenor and 7 to 12 trains per hour to Shady Grove. The infrastructure is in place to accommodate our requested increase in peak period service to Shady Grove without major capital investment.

To more fully understand if there are technical issues, I suggest that WMATA conduct a pilot project using the current schedule of 15 trains per hour to Grosvenor, but extending all of these trains to Shady Grove. If challenges arise, service can be tested at 12 trains per hour to Shady Grove with the remaining 3 trains turned back at Grosvenor. If the evidence gathered during the pilot phase determines that the 15 train per hour frequency is not feasible, then a

capital investment in the interlocking track system, which would bring the capacity up to 15 trains per hour or greater, should be prioritized within WMATA's capital needs inventory.

We agree with your assessment that WMATA is required to follow a public process including a Title VI analysis, and therefore, the WMATA Board should immediately initiate a public hearing process regarding eliminating the Grosvenor turnbacks. Once a hearing on the service change is complete, Montgomery County strongly encourages the WMATA Board to continue to support eliminating the Grosvenor turnbacks and to take the necessary actions required to implement the improved service by the established July 1, 2018 deadline.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Isiah Leggett". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Isiah" and last name "Leggett" clearly distinguishable.

Isiah Leggett
County Executive

AR:hj

c: Al Roshdieh, Director, Montgomery County Department of Transportation
Mike Goldman, WMATA Board Member
Kathy Porter, WMATA Board Member