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Chair Downs and Members of the Board:

As you are aware, an issue of great concern to riders is how Metro addresses incidents on Metrorail and, specifically, how it keeps riders informed during these incidents. The Council has been working with Metro staff to develop recommendations for improvements. The initial phase of this effort was last October, when an Incident Communications Panel was held as part of the Board's Safety and Security Committee meeting. The Council has stayed abreast of the Board's discussion of this issue as part of the report on the January Green Line incident.

As it moves forward to develop recommendations, the Council would like to broaden the conversation to directly include Metro's riders. To that end, we would like to move forward with Metro staff's proposal (attached) for a public workshop on the topic of incident communications.

Providing an opportunity for riders to be part of the dialogue on this important topic will strengthen our recommendations as well as help the Council fulfill its mission of "holding public forums with a special focus on an issue... to respond to riders' concerns." We would like to stress that the workshop should be at a time and place accessible to the majority of riders, and not held during the workday and would appreciate assistance from Metro staff to help develop and implement an outreach plan for this event.

As a recent string of incidents on Metrorail has demonstrated, riders are still disappointed in WMATA's efforts to communicate clearly and consistently. We believe this public workshop will help identify some of specific ways WMATA can improve and avoid those disappointments in the future. Riders are counting on the Authority to implement improvements both to its response to incidents and how it communicates with riders in such situations. The Council feels that this workshop and subsequent follow-up will allow for an open dialogue both about riders' needs during emergencies and Metro's ability to fulfill them.

We look forward to working with the Board and Metro staff to move this proposal forward and thank you for your continued support.

Sincerely,

Ben Ball, Chair