



600 Fifth Street NW
Washington, DC 20001
202-962-2891

August 10, 2010

Dear Councilmember Brown, Members of the Council of Governments' Board of Directors, and Members of the COG/Board of Trade WMATA Governance Task Force:

The governance of WMATA affects everyone, especially riders, as safety, customer service, fares and operations all ultimately flow from that governance. We ask you to ensure that:

- all task force meetings include a public comment period at the beginning or end;
- be open for their full length to observers;
- post advance notice and agendas of meetings online, including the names of scheduled speakers; and
- post all presentations and working papers before each meeting when possible and after each meeting otherwise.

These are all procedures the Riders' Advisory Council, COG Board of Directors, and other public bodies also adhere to, and should be a necessary component of any task forces you participate in and/or officially endorse.

The WMATA Riders' Advisory Council (RAC) has been advocating for improvements in the operations and governance of WMATA since 2006.

We are glad to see the growing interest in the important issue of WMATA governance. However, we are disappointed that you chose to explore this important issue through a task force whose closed process excludes transit riders and rider organizations, and we ask the task force members and COG Board to take steps to further open up the flow of information in and out of this group studying an important issue.

So far, opportunities for public involvement in this process have been very limited. The task force solicited some public input subject to very restrictive time limits, and has held or is planning four completely closed sessions to hear input on governance issues through July and August.

The RAC has also formed a committee to study the issue of WMATA governance. To make the most intelligent analysis possible and to enable other riders to consider and weigh in on the issues, however, we also need to hear the best practices from other jurisdictions, complaints about governance issues, and ideas for improvement from public officials and observers – the same information the task force has been soliciting.

When the task force was created, COG executive director and task force co-chair Dave Robertson assured members of the Board and members of the public that COG's participation would allow for public participation in the analysis. COG Chair Kwame Brown made similar commitments as well. We ask that all of you uphold this dedication to public participation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Frank DeBernardo".

Frank DeBernardo, Chairman

Complete to: list

Kwame Brown, COG Board Chairman, District of Columbia Councilmember
Andrea Harrison, COG Board Vice Chair, Prince George's County Vice Chair
Frank Principi, Prince William Board of County Supervisors, COG Board Vice Chair
Adrian Fenty, Mayor, District of Columbia
Neil Albert, City Administrator, District of Columbia
Vincent C. Gray, Council Chair, District of Columbia
G. Frederick Robinson, Mayor, City of Bowie
Andrew Fellows, Council Member, City of College Park
Karen Young, City of Frederick
David P. Gray, Board Vice President, Frederick County
Sidney A. Katz, Mayor, City of Gaithersburg
Judith F. Davis, Mayor, City of Greenbelt
Isiah Leggett, County Executive, Montgomery County
Roger Berliner, Councilmember, Montgomery County
Michael Knapp, Councilmember, Montgomery County
Jack B. Johnson, County Executive, Prince George's County
Camille Exum, Council Member, Prince George's County
John Britton, Council Member, City of Rockville
Bruce R. Williams, Mayor, City of Takoma Park
Benjamin Barnes, Delegate, Maryland General Assembly
William D. Euille, Mayor, City of Alexandria
Penelope A. Gross, Fairfax County Vice Chairman, Fairfax County
Walter Tejada, Board Member, Arlington County
Dan Drummond, Council Member, City of Fairfax
Sharon Bulova, Board Chairman, Fairfax County
John W. Foust, Supervisor, Fairfax County
David Snyder, Vice Mayor, City of Falls Church
Andrea McGimsey, Supervisor, Loudoun County
Sheryl Bass, Council Member, City of Manassas
Suhas Naddoni, Council Member, City of Manassas Park
W. S. Wally Covington, III, Supervisor, Prince William County
James M. Scott, Delegate, Virginia General Assembly
Timothy Firestine, Chief Administrative Officer, Montgomery County
Ralph E. Moultrie, Acting Chief Administrative Officer, Prince George's County
Michael Daniels Senior Vice President, Science Applications International Corporation
James Dyke, McGuireWoods LLP
Pat McGuire, Trinity Washington University
Tony Pierce, Akin Gump Strauss Hauler & Feld LLLP
Manny Rouvelas, K&L Gates
Scott Wilfong, Greater Washington/Maryland SunTrust Bank
Jim Dinegar, Greater Washington Board of Trade
Ron Carlee, International City/County Management Assoc.
JayEtta Hecker, Bipartisan Policy Center
Hon. Betty Ann Kane, Chairman, DC Public Services Commission
Hon. John Mason, Former Mayor, City of Fairfax
Hon. Connie Morella, American University School of Public Affairs
Bruce Romer, Westat, Inc.
Hon. Peter Shapiro, Chesapeake Center for Public Leadership
Hon. Anthony Williams, Corporate Executive Board
Dave Robertson, Executive Director, Metro. Wash. Council of Governments