



Governance Work Group Releases Draft Phase I Recommendations Report on Improving WMATA Governance

Report open for 30-day public comment period

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The Governance Work Group (GWG), created by Virginia Governor Bob McDonnell, Maryland Governor Martin O'Malley and District of Columbia Mayor Vincent Gray to address Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) governance, today released its draft Phase I Recommendations for improving the governance practices and structure of the WMATA Board of Directors.

This draft report represents the GWG's initial phase of recommendations to help guide the WMATA Board and other regional efforts to improve the board member appointment process, better define member and Chair roles and responsibilities, improve transparency and accountability and focus board activity on high-level policy. Several of the recommendations identified in this draft report being released by the transportation executives of the three jurisdictions have already been presented to the WMATA Board and have helped shape earlier revisions to the Board's first-ever Bylaws, which will be voted on later this month.

Included in this draft report are recommendations to:

- Implement board member qualifications and a reporting process on certain activities, such as attendance at Board and Committee meetings, in order to ensure some permanency to the recent improvements by the Board;
- Limit the term of board members (two consecutive four year terms) and chairmen (two years) to reflect the best practices of other transit boards;
- Establish a multi-year strategic plan, budget development and performance measurement process to focus the message being sent to WMATA management by the Board;

Mr. Terry Bellamy, director of transportation for the District of Columbia, thanked the WMATA Board for their actions to date: "Comprehensive efforts to improve governance, leadership and accountability at WMATA are currently underway. The WMATA Board should be commended for acting to address concerns raised by the Governors and Mayor in January of 2011."

Maryland Secretary of Transportation Beverley Swaim-Staley highlighted the importance of stakeholder involvement. “We welcome the opportunity for continued coordination and collaboration with stakeholders as they review these findings and prepare for the next phase of the process. The analysis recently issued by the U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO), initiated by Senator Mikulski, clearly indicates the need for clarified WMATA Board member roles and responsibilities, as well as enhanced strategic and budget planning practices. With this report, the State of Maryland, District of Columbia and Commonwealth of Virginia have taken the next step in preparing for long term changes.” The separate GAO analysis of WMATA governance will continue to guide the GWG, as well as the approach of the U.S. Congress and federal executive branch to WMATA governance and any deliberations on potential Compact amendments.

Virginia Secretary of Transportation Sean Connaughton stressed that “the GWG will continue to move toward a second phase of recommendations, including the drafting of potential legislation and Compact amendments, the role of alternates and the overall size of the WMATA Board.”

The GWG will accept public comments on the draft Phase I Recommendations report for the next 30 days. Submissions will be accepted electronically and can be emailed to: Governance.Work.Group@gmail.com. The deadline for the submission of comments is August 25, 2011.

The full GWG Phase I Recommendations Report can be viewed here:

www.drpt.virginia.gov

www.mdot.maryland.gov

www.ddot.dc.gov