



January 12, 2022

The Honorable Todd Gilbert  
Speaker, Virginia House of Delegates  
900 E. Main Street  
Richmond, VA 23219

The Honorable Richard L. Saslaw  
Majority Leader, Virginia Senate  
P.O. Box 396  
Richmond, VA 23218

Re: Repeal of current participation limitations on WMATA Board of Directors Alternates

Dear Speaker Gilbert and Majority Leader Saslaw:

On behalf of the Board of Directors of the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG), we are writing to **strongly urge the repeal of VA Code § 33.2-1526.1(L) which currently results in a reduction of funding if WMATA Alternate Directors participate in board or committee meetings when directors are present.** As the association of local governments in metropolitan Washington, the operation of a safe and effective Metro system is a top priority. We commend the Commonwealth's unprecedented commitment to provide annual dedicated funding to support the transit system throughout Northern Virginia and the metropolitan Washington region, which aligns with our 2022 Legislative Priorities.

The legislation passed in 2018 by the Commonwealth of Virginia, VA Code § 33.2-1526.1(L), requires a reduction in funding if WMATA Alternate Directors participate in board or committee meetings when directors are present. The effect of this is to impede the ability of Alternate Directors to access the information and knowledge necessary to effectively step in and represent their jurisdictions when required. In turn, this hampers the ability of each state to recruit competent alternate directors willing to serve.

In order to re-instate the ability of WMATA Board Alternate Directors to operate effectively, the board urges the Commonwealth of Virginia to repeal VA Code § 33.2-1526.1(L). Subsequent to amendment of this statute, the board urges the amendment of WMATA Bylaws Article II.11 and Article III.3.a, and otherwise as necessary, to allow Alternate Directors to participate in all board and committee meetings irrespective of the presence of the alternate's respective Director. An essential role of the WMATA Board of Directors is to ensure the transparency and accountability of the transit authority. To do so, Alternate Directors need to have access to all information provided to Directors.

Your collaboration is essential to the continued leadership our region needs to keep Metro safe and our economy thriving. We appreciate your support on this matter. If you have any questions, please contact COG Executive Director Chuck Bean at [cbean@mwkog.org](mailto:cbean@mwkog.org) or (202)962-3260.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Christian Dorsey in black ink.

Christian Dorsey  
Chair, Board of Directors  
Arlington County, Virginia

Handwritten signature of Kate Stewart in black ink.

Kate Stewart  
Vice Chair, Board of Directors  
City of Takoma Park, Maryland

Handwritten signature of Charles Allen in black ink.

Charles Allen  
Vice Chair, Board of Directors  
District of Columbia

Cc: Metropolitan Washington Area Transit Authority Board of Directors