

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

December 18, 2023

The Honorable Joseph R. Biden, Jr.
President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Biden:

We write today to respectfully request that the President's budget request for Fiscal Year 2025 include at least \$30 million for transfer to Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) for the agency's operational costs associated with national security activities and countering terrorism on the system.

WMATA's operations are critical to the functioning of the federal government in the National Capital Region. A majority of WMATA's 19.6 million riders are federal workers.¹ Over one-third of all Metrorail stations are located on federal property, serving federal facilities.² Two stations on Capitol Hill serve Members of Congress and their staffs. Federal facilities served by WMATA include our most sensitive national security installations, like the Pentagon and the Department of Homeland Security. Pentagon Station, for example, provides convenient rail access to the global headquarters of our Nation's Department of Defense and uniformed services.

Given this *sui generis* role played by WMATA, it should come as no surprise that the agency shoulders some burdens that are unique among transit providers. Perhaps most important of these burdens is WMATA's responsibility to prevent terrorism targeting our Nation's capital—a responsibility far out of proportion to the size of the system. Unfortunately, this responsibility is more than hypothetical. In 2010, an anti-government extremist opened fire at the Pentagon station.³ A year later, a man was convicted in connection with the targeting of four WMATA stations in a terrorist bomb plot.⁴ And let us not forget that it was a Metro Transit Police officer

¹ Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments. "Re: Federal Workplace Schedules and Remote Work Policies." Received by The Honorable Shalanda Young, 30 Aug. 2023, available at: <https://www.mwcog.org/documents/2023/08/30/cog-letter-on-federal-workplace-schedules/>.

² "National Capital Region Delegation Sends Letter Supporting WMATA Anti-Terror Security Grant Application." U.S. Congressman Gerry Connolly, 1 Sept. 2017, connolly.house.gov/news/documentsingle.aspx?DocumentID=1126.

³ "Pentagon Shooter Had History of Mental Illness." NBCNews.Com, NBCUniversal News Group, 5 Mar. 2010, www.nbcnews.com/id/wbna35716821.

⁴ "Virginia Man Sentenced to 23 Years in Prison for Plotting Attacks on D.C.-Area Metro Stations with People He Believed to Be al-Qaeda Members." Office of Public Affairs | Virginia Man Sentenced to 23 Years in Prison for Plotting Attacks on D.C.-Area Metro Stations with People He Believed to Be Al-Qaeda Members | United States Department of Justice, 16 Sept. 2014, www.justice.gov/opa/pr/virginia-man-sentenced-23-years-prison-plotting-

who, while assisting Capitol Police, discovered the bomb planted at the Democratic National Committee on January 6, 2021.

WMATA estimates that it spends between \$30 and \$33 million on operations relating to its national security and counterterrorism mission. Similar to the Federal Payment for Emergency Planning and Security Costs for the District of Columbia, these costs are directly attributable to the unique role WMATA plays in ensuring the safety and smooth operation of our Nation's federal government. Accordingly, it is appropriate that the federal government provide funding to WMATA for these expenses. Therefore, we respectfully request that the President's budget for FY25 include at least \$30 million to support WMATA's national security operational expenses necessary to keep the system and the National Capital Region safe.

Sincerely,



Mark R. Warner
United States Senator



Benjamin L. Cardin
United States Senator



Tim Kaine
United States Senator



Chris Van Hollen
United States Senator

Cc: The Honorable Shalanda Young