



July 24, 2008

The Honorable Harry Reid  
Majority Leader  
United States Senate  
528 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Reid:

On behalf of the Transportation Trades Department, AFL-CIO (TTD), I want to express our support for provisions in S. 3297 which provides funds for the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA). This language was originally included in the National Capital Transportation Amendments Act (S. 1446).

This measure would authorize \$1.5 billion over the next 10 years for grants to WMATA from the U.S. Department of Transportation. These funds would be targeted to infrastructure maintenance and upgrades. To receive the grants, the District of Columbia, Maryland and Virginia would need to establish dedicated funding streams to provide a total of \$1.5 billion to the transit authority. The bill would also establish a new WMATA inspector general. Together, these provisions will put Metro on a sound path toward long term fiscal and managerial stability.

WMATA is being squeezed by surging ridership, operations running at or near capacity, and severe fuel price inflation. Last week, Metrorail set records three days in a row. During June, Metrorail had the highest number of passengers in its history. Eight of the 10 busiest days occurred in 2008. On July 16, WMATA had over 830,000 riders without any specific event to spur passengers to take Metro.

It must also be remembered that Metro provides thousands of stable, good paying jobs at a time when our nation's economy is suffering. These dedicated employees in turn provide public transportation to millions who rely on the service to get to their jobs. Metro is a key component of the region's transportation network and an important part of the area economy. The funding provided in this bill will enable WMATA and its thousands of employees to meet the public transit needs of the national capital region while addressing the fiscal constraints of skyrocketing fuel costs.

**Transportation Trades Department, AFL-CIO**

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Edward Wytkind, President • Patricia Friend, Secretary-Treasurer



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For these reasons, TTD strongly supports this proposal and the \$1.5 billion investment it would provide. We urge the Senate to quickly pass this bill and we are eager to work with you and your colleagues on both sides of the aisle to accomplish this objective.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Edward Wytkind". The signature is stylized with several loops and a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Edward Wytkind  
President