



March 18, 2020

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT:

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NVTC ASKS VIRGINIA'S MEMBERS OF CONGRESS TO AID PUBLIC TRANSIT

Emergency relief needed to to COVID-19 ridership drop

Arlington, Va. - Today, the Northern Virginia Transportation Commission sent a letter to Virginia's Congressional delegation requesting relief for public transit agencies in the wake of COVID-19.

In part, the letter reads, "Locally, WMATA and VRE are experiencing a significant impact to their financial resources needed to run service. Since last week, both VRE and WMATA ridership has declined between 80% and 90%, as major events are canceled, schools closed and employers ask their employees to telecommute. However, WMATA and VRE continue to provide a reduced, lifeline service to maintain regional mobility for essential trips by hospital staff, local and federal government officials and emergency responders. Collectively, WMATA and VRE project a loss of at least \$55 million in revenue each month, in addition to the increased costs to run service during the pandemic."

Read the full letter [here](#).

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NVTC works to ensure that businesses and residents are served by a high capacity, high quality network of transit systems that allows the region to thrive. It funds and promotes transit in the counties of Arlington, Fairfax and Loudoun and the cities of Alexandria, Fairfax and Falls Church. NVTC supports five local bus systems (ART, CUE, DASH, Fairfax Connector, Loudoun County Transit), WMATA (Metrorail/Metrobus) and the Virginia Railway Express. Visit www.NoVaTransit.org or call 703-524-3322 to learn more.



March 19, 2020

Chair
Hon. Katie Cristol

The Honorable Mark R. Warner
703 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Gerald Connolly
2238 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Vice Chair
Hon. Canek Aguirre

The Honorable Tim Kaine
231 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Don Beyer
1119 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Secretary-Treasurer
Hon. Jeffrey C. McKay

City of Alexandria
Hon. Canek Aguirre
Hon. Elizabeth B. Bennett-Parker

The Honorable Jennifer Wexton
1217 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Arlington County
Hon. Katie Cristol
Hon. Libby Garvey
vacant

Re: Request for COVID-19 Disaster Relief for Public Transit Agencies

Dear Members of the Northern Virginia Congressional Delegation:

Fairfax County
Hon. Walter L. Alcorn
Hon. John Foust
Hon. Jeffrey C. McKay
Hon. Dalia A. Palchik
Hon. James R. Walkinshaw

On behalf of the Northern Virginia Transportation Commission, we urge you to support immediate emergency relief funding for public transit agencies. Like other transit agencies and commuter rail systems across the country, the Washington Metropolitan Transit Authority (WMATA) and the Virginia Railway Express (VRE) are being crippled by the COVID-19 crisis, as ridership and revenues plummet while they are still needed to serve a critical function by providing transportation for health care workers and law enforcement personnel.

City of Fairfax
Hon. David Meyer

Locally, WMATA and VRE are experiencing a significant impact to their financial resources needed to run service. Since last week, both VRE and WMATA ridership has declined between 80% and 90%, as major events are canceled, schools closed and employers ask their employees to telecommute. However, WMATA and VRE continue to provide a reduced, lifeline service to maintain regional mobility for essential trips by hospital staff, local and federal government officials and emergency responders. Collectively, WMATA and VRE project a loss of at least \$55 million in revenue each month, in addition to the increased costs to run service during the pandemic.

City of Falls Church
Hon. David F. Snyder

Loudoun County
Hon. Matthew Letourneau
Hon. Michael R. Turner

Commonwealth of Virginia
Hon. Paul C. Smedberg

We applaud the Federal Transit Administration's immediate step to allow capital formula grant funding to be used for operating assistance. This does provide immediate flexibility but does not provide any additional money for our transit agencies. With the effects of this crisis expected to last for months, we fear that this trend of lower ridership and need for additional resources will cripple our transit agencies.

Virginia General Assembly

Senate
Hon. Adam Ebbin
vacant

House of Delegates
vacant
vacant
vacant
vacant

We request your support in securing this emergency funding for WMATA and VRE so that they may continue to fulfill our critical role in safely providing lifeline service throughout the National Capital Region.

Executive Director
Katherine A. Mattice

Sincerely,

Katie Cristol, Chair