

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

June 15, 2022

Mr. Andy Off
Interim General Manager and CEO
Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority
600 5th Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20001

Dear Mr. Off:

Based on your many years of experience at WMATA, you are no doubt aware of how vocal we have been as advocates and champions for Metro and the important role it plays in the lives of Marylanders, Virginians, as well as District residents and visitors to the National Capital Region. So we are encouraged by the announcement today that some of the fleet of 7000 series cars will soon return to revenue service and that you are continuing to work diligently to address lapses in train operator certifications. This progress is welcome news, and we appreciate your efforts on these issues during this time of transition for the Authority.

At the same time, we remain concerned about the integration and prioritization of safety throughout your agency. During a time when WMATA should have been in a position to accommodate increased ridership safely and reliably as recovery from the pandemic continues, riders instead suffered service reductions due to safety-related issues. The latest signs of the Authority's failure to uphold safety protocols on a proactive, sustained basis include the poor adherence to power restoration procedures, indicating that Metro still has not completely established a culture of compliance with rules and procedures intended to ensure safety of riders and employees.

WMATA needs to break its pattern of taking corrective action only after a safety incident occurs or after oversight authorities notify you of urgent issues. This pattern will continue as long as WMATA tolerates noncompliance with rules and procedures, including its own rules and procedures. In light of recent events, it is indisputable that previous efforts to establish a new safety culture have so far proven insufficient. We are hopeful that today's announcement is a sign that you understand how your time as interim general manager can be used productively to lay the groundwork for a lasting course correction that reaches deep within Metro that values rules, procedures, transparency, and accountability as a matter of routine. This work cannot wait for Mr. Clarke to join Metro later this summer.

Transit riders in the National Capital Region deserve better than what they have received from Metro for months. They deserve a well-functioning and reliable transit system backed by an organization-wide adherence to safety rules and procedures. Safety cannot be an afterthought.

Your tenure as interim General Manager and CEO comes at a critical time for WMATA. As ridership recovers from the drop caused by COVID-19, the Authority must work to meet this rising demand seamlessly. We remain committed partners to WMATA in meeting this challenge. We look forward to hearing from you on the additional, critical work needed to better embed safety into the Authority's organizational culture.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



Benjamin L. Cardin
United States Senator



Mark Warner
United States Senator



Tim Kaine
United States Senator



Chris Van Hollen
United States Senator