

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

June 30, 2017

The Honorable Elaine Chao
Secretary
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary Chao,

We write to request that you reverse entirely the Federal Transit Administration's (FTA) February 10, 2017 decision to withhold five percent of federal transit grants from the Commonwealth of Virginia, the State of Maryland, and the District of Columbia. The decision to withhold the funds authorized under the Urbanized Area Apportionments Program was crude, punitive, and arbitrary, and the process that led to the decision was deeply flawed.

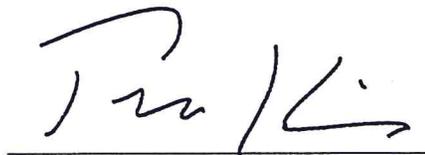
In summary, the one-year timeline imposed on the jurisdictions to establish and certify the Metro Safety Commission (MSC) ignored both the unique legislative calendars of the citizen legislatures in Maryland and Virginia as well as the time consuming, FTA-managed certification process for State Safety Oversight Programs. The decision to withhold vital transit investments as a punishment for missing an arbitrary deadline was announced at a time when all three jurisdictions were moving to enact legislation to establish an interstate compact for the MSC. And the FTA did not publish the Toolkit, Application, or Program Standard for the SSOP certification process until February 14, 2017 – four days after the five percent withholding was announced.

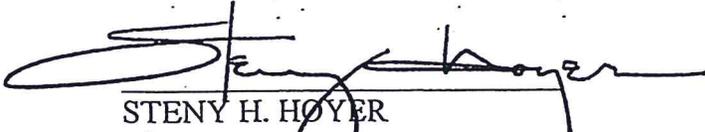
In light of these errors, we ask that you release the withheld funds and work constructively with the jurisdictions and our regional delegation to certify the MSC. As you know, the three jurisdictions have enacted and the U.S. Senate has passed legislation on the MSC compact, and we are urging leadership in the U.S. House of Representatives to do the same without further delay.

We will not accept further harm inflicted on our region at a time when safety and maintenance investments are so desperately needed by the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority and our region's other transit systems. We are your partners in the effort to put Metro on a path to safer operations. Please consider this request in the spirit of that partnership.

Sincerely,


GERALD E. CONNOLLY
11th District, Virginia


TIM KAINE
U.S. Senator, Virginia



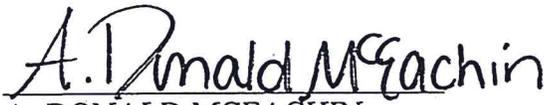
STENY H. HOYER
5th District, Maryland



ELIJAH CUMMINGS
7th District, Maryland



JOHN K. DELANEY
6th District, Maryland



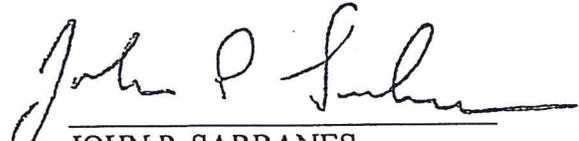
A. DONALD MCEACHIN
4th District, Virginia



ANTHONY BROWN
4th District, Maryland



ROBERT C. "BOBBY" SCOTT
3rd District, Virginia



JOHN P. SARBANES
3rd District, Maryland



DONALD S. BEYER, JR.
8th District, Virginia



JAMIE RASKIN
8th District, Maryland



MARK WARNER
U.S. Senator, Virginia