



June 21, 2023

Los Angeles Metropolitan Transportation Authority
One Gateway Plaza
Los Angeles, California, 90012-2952
Via Email To Boardclerk@Metro.Net

Re: Oppose Item #21, Metro's Proposed In-House Police Department; and instead use a Shared Services Model of Emergency Response

Dear Metro Board of Directors,

We, the below signed organizations, write in opposition to Metro's efforts to create an in-house police department. Metro's riders are overwhelmingly people from lower-income households. More than 6 in 10 Metro riders earn under \$25,000 a year, and many are riding Metro as their only means to access the resources and services they need to live. Metro's riders are also overwhelmingly people of color. Black riders, in particular, have been consistently, disproportionately, and negatively impacted by police on Metro. Every year for at least the last three years under the Metro police contract, 50% of Metro citations and arrests have gone to Black riders, despite Black riders comprising under 20% of Metro ridership. This is unjust.

We call on Metro to do better for its transit riders and invest instead in care-based safety strategies, faster buses, and a universal fareless Metro, NOT police expansion.

Metro does not need police contracts or an in-house police department to keep riders safe. As Metro's Office of Inspector General (OIG) reported in 2016 and 2022, local law enforcement departments have a responsibility to conduct a variety of operations on Metro property, including 911 response, criminal investigations, accident investigations, major incident response, and police patrols. Indeed, tragic incidents like the recent bus operator attack in Woodland Hills show that non-contracted emergency responders were then, and often are, the closest and appropriate personnel to respond to tragic incidents on Metro. It is a waste of public resources to spend money on police response that is already covered by local neighborhood patrol. We urge Metro to complete a feasibility study and implementation plan for a shared services model of emergency response to law enforcement as an alternative option to both an in-house police department and contracts.

A shared service model of emergency response is when two public agencies draw on a pool of resources paid for by one of the two public agencies, not both. In this model, each public agency serves the public without inter-agency contracts or in-house departments with duplicative geographic coverage. Metro already coordinates emergency fire and medical services using a shared services approach and can apply this same model to law enforcement.

Metro should re-invest its large public safety resources into proven, unarmed safety systems and in improving bus service, as recommended by Metro's own Public Safety Advisory Committee and community groups like ACT-LA. To the extent Metro or its riders seek police responses to critical incidents, Metro should explore the feasibility of coordinating existing law enforcement resources like it does with emergency medical and fire response.

Sincerely,

Alliance for Community Transit - Los Angeles (ACT-LA)

ACLU - Southern California

Alliance for Boys and Men of Color

Black Lives Matter - Los Angeles

Community Power Collective

Esperanza Community Housing Corporation

Ground Game LA

Jobs to Move America

Koreatown Immigrant Workers Alliance (KIWA)

Los Angeles Black Workers Center

Los Angeles Walks

Strategic Action for a Just Economy (SAJE)