



Advisory Neighborhood Commission 2A

“Serving the Foggy Bottom and West End communities of Washington, D.C.”

February 22, 2016

Ms. Jennifer Green Ellison
Board Corporate Secretary
Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority
600 5th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20001
speak@wmata.com

**RE: Designation of ANC 2A Representative to Testify on Behalf of ANC 2A
at WMATA Board Hearing on WMATA’s FY 2017 Operating and Capital
Budgets**

Dear Ms. Ellison,

At its regular meeting on February 17, 2016, Advisory Neighborhood Commission 2A (“ANC 2A” or “Commission”) considered the above-referenced matter. With six of seven commissioners present, a quorum at a duly-noticed public meeting, the Commission voted unanimously (**6-0-0**), after a motion made by Commissioner Zhurbinskiy and seconded by Commissioner Williams, to designate Commissioner Eve Zhurbinskiy (2A08@anc.dc.gov), the Commissioner for Single Member District 2A08, as ANC 2A’s designated representative at the upcoming Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) Board Hearing on WMATA’s FY 2017 Operating and Capital Budgets.

ON BEHALF OF THE COMMISSION.

Sincerely,

Patrick Kennedy
Chairperson



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WMATA Hearing on Proposed FY2017 Operating Budget

Testimony by ANC 2A on the Proposed University Pass Program

Thank you for hosting this hearing on Metro’s proposed budget, which includes the proposed University Pass. My name is Eve Zhurbinskiy and I represent ANC Single Member District 2A08, and am a sophomore at the George Washington University. I am pleased to be here tonight to convey ANC 2A’s thoughts on the proposed University Pass.

At our November meeting, our ANC unanimously passed a resolution expressing our support to Councilmember Evans and Chairman Downey for this program. Our neighborhoods - Foggy Bottom and the West End - are home to D.C.’s largest university, and almost all of GW’s approximately 10,000 undergraduate students reside within our ANC’s boundaries. As such, our constituents stand to greatly benefit if this proposal is implemented.

GW was recently ranked the #1 school in the country for internships by the Princeton Review. Unfortunately, due to the cost of transportation, some students resort to cost savings measures when it comes to taking on an internship. I’ve talked to students who say they would be unable to intern for their dream organization if there was no transportation stipend offered. I’ve heard of students who walk 50 or so minutes to Capitol Hill for their unpaid internship because the cost of taking the Metro there every day is prohibitively expensive. A U-Pass would ensure that no student will have to choose between professional development and paying the cost of public transportation.

D.C. attracts tens of thousands of prospective college students every year due to its location. By implementing the U-Pass, students will be better equipped to utilize all the educational resources the city has to offer. A professor may be more inclined to have class at a museum, for example, if he or she knows that cost is not a barrier to student participation. The same may hold true when it comes to participating in service events around the city - students would be more likely to travel to a different neighborhood for community service if transportation costs were not a factor.

Most of GW’s 14,000 graduate students, as well as some undergraduates, commute to the Foggy Bottom campus on a regular basis. For these commuter students, the U-Pass will bring considerable savings - in some cases, hundreds of dollars a month. A student who commutes from Takoma, for example spends \$120 a month on Metro to and from campus. As someone who has worked in East Falls Church since my first semester of college, I know that I personally would see cost savings in the vicinity of \$75 a month should this program be implemented. The resulting savings are likely to be reinvested in local businesses, benefiting communities across D.C and the region.

Though some students don’t use Metro on a regular basis, this program will provide the incentive to boost student ridership rates and win back those who use rideshare services, provide the necessary revenue for Metro, and reduce pollution caused



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by utilizing less sustainable methods of transportation. Increased ridership will lead to more reliable service and less student concern about delays, and students will be more likely to use Metro during off-peak hours, particularly during weekends and late nights. Friday night trips to bars and restaurants in Adams Morgan, for example, would be more hassle-free with a U-Pass, as would weekend trips to the Target in Columbia Heights to stock up on goods.

In closing, ANC 2A believes that the U-Pass program will significantly benefit the student population in our neighborhood by making transportation more affordable, and will impact the greater region by increasing ridership.