

August 11, 2020

Metropolitan Transportation Commission  
375 Beale Street, Suite 700  
San Francisco, CA 94105

Re: Completion of Comprehensive Region-wide Plan to Protect Transit Workers and Riders

Dear Chair Sperling and Blue Ribbon Transit Recovery Task Force Members:

We are writing to follow-up on the discussion at the July 22 MTC Commission meeting, including statements made by MTC Executive Director, Therese McMillan, and various Commissioners. In response to that discussion, and the public comments made at that meeting, we ask you to:

- Share publicly a complete draft of the transit worker and rider health and safety plan two weeks before the next MTC meeting (i.e., no later than August 12);
- Ensure the plan includes the attached recommended requirements, per the demands of frontline transit operators and transit riders; and
- Present the first monthly report about the transit agencies' compliance with these standards to the full Commission on August 26, and ongoing monthly reports at future Commission meetings.

At the July 22 Commission meeting, more than twenty representatives of transit workers and riders made public comments asking that a draft of the transit safety plan be made public with ample time for the workers and community to review and comment.

We want to acknowledge that as of July 22, some progress has been made. For instance, the presentation on the status of the "Bay Area Healthy Transit Plan" at the July 20 Blue Ribbon Task Force meeting reported that the plan would include standards relating to the following "Common Commitments:"

- State Mandated Face Coverings
- Safe Distancing & Capacity
- Daily Cleaning & Disinfecting
- Provide PPE for Employees

However, this is still an incomplete list of commitments that need to be included in the plan. Moreover, most of these commitments have not yet been defined. At a minimum, all of the ten standards in the attached chart should be included in the plan.

Public review in advance of the August Commission meeting is important, not only to allow transit workers and riders the opportunity to review for completeness, but also because even the standards defined to date are not yet strong enough. For instance, the "Bay Area Healthy Transit Plan" presentation reports a standard of "requiring a mask for every rider," and then reports that every Bay Area transit agency is meeting that standard. That standard, however, is redundant of existing state law. The appropriate and necessary standard for the region -- that

every transit agency is providing a mask to every rider who needs one -- has not yet been addressed.

**The stakeholders in this process who are placing their health and safety on the line every day by operating, maintaining, and riding our transit system are demanding prompt adoption of strong region-wide safety standards. They are the stakeholders whose subjective experience of feeling protected -- or not -- will determine the survival of public transportation in the Bay Area.** We urge you to move promptly, accountably, and transparently to provide them with a complete plan no later than August 12.

Sincerely,

Ellen Wu, Executive Director  
Urban Habitat

Hayley Currier, Policy Advocacy Manager  
TransForm

James Lindsay III, International Vice President  
Amalgamated Transit Union

Stacy Murphy, Business Representative  
Teamsters Local 853

John Courtney, President  
Amalgamated Transit Union Local #265

Roger Marengo, President  
Transport Workers' Union Local 250A

Cc: MTC Commissioners  
MTC Executive Director Therese McMillan

1. Provide all recommended personal protective equipment to every worker, including gloves, masks, sanitizers, and all PPE needed.
2. Provide passengers with masks and hand sanitizer to board a transit vehicle.
3. Pandemic leave for anyone showing symptoms of COVID-19, exposed to them, or with family or childcare obligations resulting from shutdowns.
4. Compensate workers classified as essential workers during a public health crisis at least 1.5 times their normal wage.
5. Rear door entry and fare elimination to support social distancing.
6. Retain transit employees and maintain their current wages and benefits.
7. Strategic continuation of service to avoid overcrowding.
8. Limit bus passenger loads to no more than 10 and paratransit to no more than 1.
9. Install plexiglass protective barriers between operators and riders to protect both operators and passengers from any transfer of droplets.
10. Provide fully-paid, on-site testing for transit workers COVID-19 symptoms.