

Metro

Los Angeles County
Metropolitan Transportation
Authority
One Gateway Plaza
3rd Floor Board Room
Los Angeles, CA



Board Report

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REGULAR BOARD MEETING MAY 23, 2024

Motion by:

DIRECTORS BASS, BARGER, HAHN, SOLIS, NAJARIAN, AND YAROSLAVSKY

Metro Public Safety Surge Motion

Recently, our system has endured an uptick in violence and crime. Law enforcement agencies are reporting a rise in crime, resulting in increased arrests and citations for trespassing, narcotics, and weapons possession. As Metro ridership continues to increase to pre-pandemic levels, reaching more than 950,000 weekday riders in March 2024, the increase in crime threatens to derail our goal of exceeding 1.2 million weekday riders if we cannot ensure the safety of those who want and need to use the bus and rail system. As a Board, we propose urgent, decisive action to keep our riders, employees, and community members safe.

The Metro Board of Directors took swift action last month to approve the manufacture and installation of reinforced physical barriers to better protect bus operators from this senseless violence. Metro's entire bus fleet is anticipated to be fitted with new barriers by the end of the year. However, this is not enough. There has been a surge in violent crimes across the Metro bus and rail system over the past 3 months, resulting in death, injuries, and increased safety concerns for Metro's riders and frontline employees.

Additionally, Wi-Fi and cell phone service are not reliably available throughout Metro's rail system, hampering our riders' ability to communicate with public safety personnel. Metro's Transit Watch Mobile App, for instance, allows riders to directly contact emergency and law enforcement personnel by text or phone, but requires Wi-Fi or cellular service. We must ensure Wi-Fi and cell phone service are available systemwide so that riders can quickly and easily contact public safety personnel when needed.

While Metro and its security partners have taken many steps to improve safety, we must do more to ensure the safety of our riders and employees across the system.

SUBJECT: METRO PUBLIC SAFETY SURGE MOTION

RECOMMENDATION

APPROVE Motion by Bass, Barger, Hahn, Solis, Najarian, and Yaroslavsky that the Board direct the

Chief Executive Officer to:

- A. Increase the daily planned deployment of public safety personnel, adjusting deployment to focus on the rail cars, buses, and stations with the highest incidents of crime and public safety issues so that riders and frontline employees feel safe.
- B. Direct public safety personnel, including Los Angeles Police Department, Los Angeles Sheriff's Department, Long Beach Police Department, and Metro Transit Security officers to be physically present on buses and trains.
- C. Direct public safety personnel to proactively walk through rail cars and ride buses. Public safety personnel must also schedule overlapping or staggered shift times to ensure continuity and avoid gaps in coverage.
- D. Establish a unified command led by Metro's Systems Security & Law Enforcement Department, with representation from all public safety resources.
- E. Ensure that cellular service is enabled and working at all underground metro rail stations, on the platforms, and during transit throughout the rail system, and bolster education and awareness of Metro's Transit Watch Mobile App so riders can directly access an emergency response.