



U.S. Department
of Transportation

Administrator

1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

**Federal Transit
Administration**

MAR 22 2016

Mr. Paul J. Wiedefeld
General Manager and Chief Executive Officer
Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority
600 5th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20001-2693

RE: Review of Project List for Funding under the Passenger Rail Investment and Improvement Act

Dear Mr. Wiedefeld:

I am writing in response to the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority's (WMATA) proposed list of projects for funding using the \$148.5 million in Fiscal Year (FY) 2016 Federal appropriations provided under the authority of Section 601 of the Passenger Rail Investment and Improvement Act (PRIIA) of 2008 (P.L. 110-432), plus the required equal amount of local matching funds, for a total of \$297 million. The proposed PRIIA projects are part of WMATA's larger \$898 million FY 2017 Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) submitted to FTA for review.

In addition to the proposed FY 2016 PRIIA funds reviewed, FTA withheld \$15.4 million in FY 2015 PRIIA funds in September of 2015. This was done pending FTA approval of WMATA's Corrective Action Plan resulting from the Federal Transit Administration's (FTA) Safety Management Inspection (SMI). With the required local matching funds this FY 2015 amount is \$30.9 million. Following discussion with FTA, these funds are now proposed to be redirected to the replacement of the obsolete Series 1000 rail cars in WMATA's CIP (CIP0057). This will support a critical safety improvement.

I am pleased that among the measures proposed for FY 2016 is \$6.1 million in funding for ongoing Third Rail Rehabilitation (CIP0023) work as part of the larger program of track maintenance and upkeep that is included in your six year Capital Improvement Plan. This is consistent with the FTA's SMI recommendation that "WMATA must address third rail insulator cleaning and replacement requirements and third rail jumper cable inspection and replacement requirements as part of the "Fire/Life Safety 1000" procedure, or in separate but referenced procedures" (FTA-Rail-5-35-B). This will supplement prior FTA funds directed to this multiyear investment in rehabilitation work.

The FTA has completed review of the proposed PRIIA projects and approves the plan, including the use of both the FY 2016 and prior year PRIIA funds as identified in WMATA's FY 2017 CIP.

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Every budget submitted to Congress by President Obama has strongly supported the annual appropriation of funds authorized for this program which must be directed to the maintenance and upkeep of the WMATA system. The FTA expects continued direction of PRIIA funds to priority safety and maintenance actions, and this is an important step in WMATA's efforts to improve the system.

Please continue to keep in mind that these funds cannot substitute for the regular State and local funds provided to support WMATA's capital program. This ensures that Federal PRIIA funds will match local contributions that truly supplement rather than supplant prior year contributions.

Please call me directly at (202) 366-4040 if you would like to discuss this matter further.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Therese W. McMillan". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Therese W. McMillan
Acting Administrator